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THE

ORLANDO FURIOSO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

FROM THE ITALIAN OF

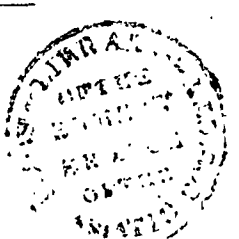
LUDOVICO ARIOSTO

WITH NOTES

BY

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE

VOL. I.



LONDON
JOHN MURRAY ALBEMARLE-STREET
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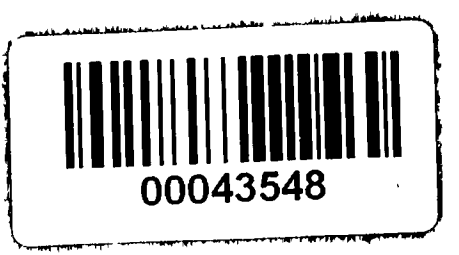

TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT,

OF ABBOTSFORD, BART.

Who persuaded me to resume the present work, which had been thrown aside, on the ground that such labour was its own reward.

Scott, for whom Fame a gorgeous garland weaves,
Who what was scattered to the wasting wind,
As grain too coarse to gather or to bind,
Bad'st me collect and gird in goodly sheaves;

If this poor seed hath formed its stalk and leaves,
Transplanted from a softer clime, and pined,
For lack of southern suns, in soil unkind,
Where Ceres or Italian Flora grieves;

And if some fruit, however dwindled, fill
The doubtful ear, though scant the crop and bare,
(Ah! how unlike the growth of Tuscan hill,
Where the glad harvest springs behind the share*)
Praise be to thee! who taught me that to till
Was sweet, however paid the peasant's care.

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

* A second wheat harvest follows closely upon the first in some parts of Tuscany.

INTRODUCTION.

It will, probably, be expected that a new translation of the Furioso should be prefaced by some account of the versions which have preceded it; and I the more readily undertake this little task, as in the execution of it my reasons will be found for the enterprize upon which I have myself adventured.

The first version of Ariosto's great poem was made by Sir John Harrington, the godson of Queen Elizabeth, who translated it into the same stanza as that of the original. The main defect of this work is its infidelity, and I cannot better illustrate this than by observing, that he has compressed a canto of nearly two hundred stanzas into ninety. A more unpardonable defect is, that he always omits what is best worth preserving; and, as an Italian friend

once observed to me, it is the poetry of Ariosto which he sacrifices. Another defect of this translator is that of exaggerating the extravagances of his author, and often spreading a ray of humour into a broad glare of buffoonery.

The history of his work may explain these faults, and more especially the last; as we are told he began his labours with the story of Giocondo, without the intention of pursuing them further; when his royal mistress imposed upon him the entire version of the Furioso as a sort of covering for the indecent episode which he had chosen to give as a specimen of the Italian.

If, however, Harrington cannot pretend to much merit as a translator, he has some claims to consideration as a writer, and his work has fallen into more obscurity than the antiquated language in which he writes, will serve to explain. His idioms, his grammar, and his construction (though things with difficulty kept free from foreign modes of speech in a translation) are exclusively English. His narrative is light and lively, and, in perusing it, the

reader always feels as if he is swimming with the stream.

The gleam of Italian sunshine, during which he wrote, though it produced beneficial effects upon our literature, was of short duration.

"At one stride came the dark *."

The study of Italian letters was dropped at once, and I believe that no traces of literary intercourse between Italy and England are to be found during the succeeding age.

In the reign of George II. however, we have a proof of renewed intercourse in the publication of a new translation of the Furioso, dedicated to that monarch, as Harrington's version had been to Queen Elizabeth. This work was produced by William Huggins, Esq. of Headly Park, near Farnham, in Surrey. He was, I am told, reckoned in his day a very learned man, was passionately devoted to music, said to be a great proficient in it, and to have been

* Coleridge's Ancient Mariner.

the person who figures in Hogarth's picture, as the Enraged Musician.

But, whatever other accomplishments he may have possessed, he had certainly no feeling of poetry, and seems to have taken it up as Vernon did rebellion; "because it lay in his way." At least I know no better reason for his translation of Ariosto than his having made a journey to Italy.

The title-page of his book (in two vols. quarto) bears the date of 1757, and was printed for Rivington in Paternoster-row, and John Cook, a bookseller of Farnham, whose shop I remember frequenting in the days of my boyhood. It is printed with the English and Italian confronted, executed in the same stanza as Harrington's version, and translated line for line. Though there are to be found in it some very strange mistakes of Ariosto's meaning, it is, generally speaking, faithful, and as such, has, *primâ facie*, strong claims upon attention. But a species of fidelity is hardly to be coveted, which, at the best, does not accomplish the only end which should be proposed by it. For the translator often

departs from the sense of the author, while he echoes his very words. Take an instance. Ariosto has this line.

Dove presso a Bordea mette Caronna.

"where the Garonne disembogues itself near Bordeaux:" which Huggins has rendered,

Where to Bordea runs Caronna near.

The thing, perhaps, most worthy of remark in his book, is a passage of the preface, which throws a curious light upon the state of Italian literature in England at the period of its publication. "It may not be improper (says the author) to observe, that after this work was pretty far advanced, I was informed there had been a translation published in the reign of Elizabeth, and dedicated to that queen. Whereupon I requested a friend to obtain a sight of that book; for it is (it seems) very scarce, *and the glorious original much more so in this country.*"

A few years produced a singular revolution in this respect. Several editions of Ariosto have since that period been published in England; and Hoole's

version, the next which succeeded that of Huggins, has, I believe, gone through nearly twenty editions.

This last circumstance may, however, be cited, rather as a proof of the new passion entertained for Italian literature, than as an illustration of the progress which had been made in it: for never was a worse or more faithless translation executed than that of Hoole. Every grace, every shade, every gradation of colouring which distinguishes Ariosto, is lost in it. Thus, where the Italian poet, in imitation of Homer, wishing to diversify a scene of slaughter, by giving something of character or of locality to his victims, tells us that Rodomont wounded Lewis the Provencal, *Luigi il provenzal*, Hoole has absurdly translated the passage '*Provincial Lewis;*' thus awakening a most ridiculous train of ideas, and suggesting the notion of some unfortunate provincial who had the misfortune to have his brains knocked out on his visit to the metropolis. Nor are they only tints and shades which are sacrificed in this miserable copy; for the sense of the author, where most obvious, is frequently

misinterpreted; and in one couplet the translator has actually mistaken *north* for south, and *sun* for wind; the one specified, and the other obviously implied. The words of the original are,

> ' Ver ponente io andava lungo la sabbia,
> Che del *settentrion* sente la rabbia.'
>
> Canto VI. stanza xxxiv.

Which passage is thus rendered by him:

> Against the west along those sands we came,
> Which feel the *southern heat of Phœbus' flame* *.

In addition, however, to the mistakes of Hoole, and what I must call the meanness and monotony of his poetry, I am inclined to consider the metre which he has chosen, as one among the many causes of his failure: this is our heroic couplet, which appears to me to be the measure most opposite to that of Ariosto which could possibly have been selected. Nothing but a stanza can reflect the original; for it is to be observed, that the poet

* Thus translated obscurely, but more accurately, by Huggins.

> Towards the west I came along that strand
> Which does the powerful northern blast command.

usually closes the idea with it, and that the end of most of them is marked by something epigrammatic either in sense or sound, which would be out of its place except in the concluding couplet. Each canto, or collection of stanzas, then may be compared to a gallery of cabinet pictures, all perhaps striking or beautiful, but frequently executed on different principles, each of which is often only in harmony with itself. Whoever, therefore, unites any of these little paintings, yet more, he who runs them into one piece, will necessarily either present a picture full of cross lights, and every species of inconsistency, or will only avoid this by leaving out whatever is most characteristic in the original, and by making a smear without light, shade, or distinction of outline.

Entertaining this opinion, I have chosen the stanza in preference to the couplet; and because I would imitate Ariosto as closely as the nature of our language will allow, have, like Harrington and Huggins, chosen his own *ottava rima* as the most preferable form of it. Like Mr. Huggins, I have also

translated stanza for stanza, but have not, however, imitated that gentleman and some German translators by imposing on myself severer restrictions than appeared to me to be necessary; as in rendering him uniformly line for line; the less so because there is little analogy between the construction of the two languages, and what is easy in the Italian (I need not say that ease is one characteristic of Ariosto) might often appear harsh and inverted in English. It is for this reason that I have not fettered myself by the rule I have mentioned, wherever I conceived any bad effect would result from the adherence to it; but I have, on the other hand, observed it where I thought such a compliance was not objectionable; because I would, wherever it was practicable, tread in the very footsteps of the Italian poet.

My reasons for so religious, some may think so superstitious, an observance of my author's text, have, at least, not been hastily adopted. A long consideration of the means through which he wrought, has convinced me that many strong or beautiful ef-

fects produced by him, result out of an accumulation of circumstances, which, though they may appear of little value taken separately, are to be esteemed important as conducing, each in its place, to the main object of the poet. In this particularity he bears a striking resemblance to Defoe. The Furioso moreover often pleases as a whole, where it offends in parts, and, notwithstanding many defects, is perhaps the poetical work which is oftenest re-perused with pleasure. Among the many things which have probably contributed to this, may be remarked Ariosto's frequent sacrifice of force to truth; which (to take a short instance) I should say was illustrated by Pinabel's narration of the loss of his lady, in the second canto, where some may be inclined to think that the poet overtalks himself, and many might wish to see the infusion of a spirit, which would perhaps be out of harmony with the circumstances. He is often also studious of what the artists call a repose, and upon which a translator should be most cautious never to intrude. These

are some of the reasons why I have followed my leader so warily, and have never intentionally deviated from the print of his steps.

I am, however, well aware that a very weighty objection may be made to a translation so close as that which I present to the reader. It may be said that a simplicity of diction, which is pleasing in the Italian, is only to be endured in a less perfect language, when seasoned by the addition of some grace, congenial with the spirit of that into which it is transfused: and hence that to translate the Furioso faithfully into English, would be, to borrow a metaphor used somewhere by Alfieri, to transfer an air from the harp to the hurdy-gurdy.

There is, undoubtedly, great force in this reasoning and illustration. To this, however, I will oppose, in the way of question, *another* illustration which is drawn from a sister art. Would a real lover of Raphael prefer a copy of one of his pictures, which, though well painted, did not convey a true idea of his colouring, or a print of it carefully executed, which gave, at least, a faithful idea of the

design? To those who would choose the engraving I offer the following translation.

That it *is* diligently executed, I may venture to assert; for, mistrusting a hasty mode of reading and a facility of composition, I have sought to guard against the faults incidental to these habits, by frequent and attentive correction. I have with this view, submitted every sheet of my present translation to judicious English and Italian friends; have carefully, if not impartially, weighed their objections, and revised my translation more than once by a close comparison with the original.

ERRATA.

Page 32, note 6, *for* vince, *read* vincea.
38, argument, *for* Bradamont, *read* Bradamant.
56, stanza liii., dele comma *after* flanks.
88, stanza liii., *for* campaign, *read* champaign.
89, stanza lvi., *instead of* as to Augustus, *read* as to Augustus'.
170, stanza lxxxi., line 5, *after* who there, as lord, *dele* and.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

Angelica, whom pressing danger frights,
Flies in disorder through the greenwood shade.
Rinaldo's horse escapes: he, following, fights
Ferrau, the Spaniard, in a forest glade.
A second oath the haughty paynim plights,
And keeps it better than the first he made.
King Sacripant regains his long-lost treasure;
But good Rinaldo mars his promised pleasure.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO I.

I.

Of loves and ladies, knights and arms, I sing,
Of courtesies, and many a daring feat;
And from those ancient days my story bring,
When Moors from Afric passed in hostile fleet,
And ravaged France, with Agramant their king,
Flushed with his youthful rage and furious heat;
Who on king Charles', the Roman emperor's head
Had vowed due vengeance for Troyano dead.

II.

In the same strain of Roland[1] will I tell
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,
On whom strange madness and rank fury fell,
A man esteemed so wise in former time;
If she, who to like cruel pass has well
Nigh brought my feeble wit which fain would climb
And hourly wastes my sense, concede me skill
And strength my daring promise to fulfil.

III.

Good seed of Hercules[2] give ear and deign,
Thou that this age's grace and splendour art,
Hippolitus, to smile upon his pain
Who tenders what he has with humble heart.
For though all hope to quit the score were vain,
My pen and page may pay the debt in part;
Then, with no jealous eye my offering scan,
Nor scorn my gift who give thee all I can.

IV.

And me, amid the worthiest shalt thou hear,
Whom I with fitting praise prepare to grace,
Record the good Rogero[3], valiant peer,
The ancient root of thine illustrious race.
Of him, if thou wilt lend a willing ear,
The worth and warlike feats I shall retrace;
So thou thy graver cares some little time
Postponing, lend thy leisure to my rhyme.

V.

Roland, who long the lady of Catay[4],
Angelica, had loved, and with his brand
Raised countless trophies to that damsel gay,
In India, Median, and Tartarian land,
Westward with her had measured back his way;
Where, nigh the Pyrenees, with many a band
Of Germany and France, King Charlemagne
Had camped his faithful host upon the plain.

VI.

To make king Agramant, for penance, smite
His cheek, and rash Marsilius rue the hour;
This, when all trained with lance and sword to fight,
He led from Africa to swell his power;
That other when he pushed, in fell despite,
Against the realm of France Spain's martial flower.
'Twas thus Orlando came where Charles was tented
In evil hour, and soon the deed repented.

VII.

For here was seized his dame of peerless charms,
(How often human judgment wanders wide)!
Whom in long warfare he had kept from harms,
From western climes to eastern shores her guide
In his own land, 'mid friends and kindred arms,
Now without contest severed from his side.
Fearing the mischief kindled by her eyes,
From him the prudent emperor reft the prize.

VIII.

For bold Orlando and his cousin[5], free
Rinaldo late contended for the maid,
Enamoured of that beauty rare; since she
Alike the glowing breast of either swayed.
But Charles, who little liked such rivalry,
And drew an omen thence of feebler aid,
To abate the cause of quarrel, seized the fair,
And placed her in Bavarian Namus' care.

IX.

Vowing with her the warrior to content,
Who in that conflict, on that fatal day,
With his good hand most gainful succour lent,
And slew most paynims in the martial fray.
But counter to his hopes the battle went,
And his thinned squadrons fled in disarray;
Namus, with other christian captains taken,
And his pavilion in the rout forsaken.

X.

There, lodged by Charles, that gentle bonnibel,
Ordained to be the valiant victor's meed,
Before the event had sprung into her sell,
And from the combat turned in time of need;
Presaging wisely Fortune would rebel
That fatal day against the Christian creed:
And, entering a thick wood, discovered near,
In a close path, a horseless cavalier,

XI.

With shield upon his arm, in knightly wise,
Belted and mailed, his helmet on his head;
The knight more lightly through the forest hies
Than half-clothed churl to win the cloth of red[6].
But not from cruel snake more swiftly flies[7]
The timid shepherdess, with startled tread,
Than poor Angelica the bridle turns
When she the approaching knight on foot discerns.

XII.

This was that Paladin, good Aymon's seed,
Who Mount Albano had in his command;
And late Bayardo lost, his gallant steed,
Escaped by strange adventure from his hand.
As soon as seen, the maid who rode at speed
The warrior knew, and, while yet distant, scanned
The angelic features and the gentle air
Which long had held him fast in Cupid's snare.

XIII.

The affrighted damsel turns her palfrey round,
And shakes the floating bridle in the wind;
Nor in her panic seeks to choose her ground,
Nor open grove prefers to thicket blind.
But reckless, pale and trembling, and astound,
Leaves to her horse the devious way to find.
He up and down the forest bore the dame,
Till to a sylvan river's bank he came.

XIV.

Here stood the fierce Ferrau[8] in grisly plight,
Begrimed with dust, and bathed with sweat and blood;
Who lately had withdrawn him from the fight,
To rest and drink at that refreshing flood:
But there had tarried in his own despite,
Since bending from the bank, in hasty mood,
He dropped his helmet in the crystal tide,
And vainly to regain the treasure tried.

XV.

Thither at speed she drives, and evermore
In her wild panic utters fearful cries;
And at the voice, upleaping on the shore,
The Saracen her lovely visage spies.
And, pale as is her cheek, and troubled sore,
Arriving, quickly to the warrior's eyes
(Though many days no news of her had shown)
The beautiful Angelica is known.

XVI.

Courteous, and haply gifted with a breast
As warm as either of the cousins two*;
As bold, as if his brows in steel were dressed,
The succour which she sought he lent, and drew
His faulchion, and against Rinaldo pressed,
Who saw with little fear the champion true.
Not only each to each was known by sight,
But each had proved in arms his foeman's might.

XVII.

Thus, as they are, on foot the warriors vie
In cruel strife, and blade to blade oppose;
No marvel plate or brittle mail should fly,
When anvils had not stood the deafening blows.
It now behoves the palfrey swift to ply
His feet; for while the knights in combat close,
Him vexed to utmost speed, with goading spurs,
By waste or wood the frighted damsel stirs.

* Orlando and Rinaldo.

XVIII.

After the two had struggled long to throw
Each other in the strife, and vainly still;
Since neither valiant warrior was below
His opposite in force and knightly skill:
The first to parley with his Spanish foe
Was the good master of Albano's hill
(As one within whose raging breast was pent
A reckless fire which struggled for a vent).

XIX.

"Thou think'st," he said, "to injure me alone,
"But know thou wilt thyself as much molest:
"For if we fight because yon rising sun
"This raging heat has kindled in thy breast,
"What were thy gain, and what the guerdon won,
"Though I should yield my life, or stoop my crest;
"If she shall never be thy glorious meed,
"Who flies, while vainly we in battle bleed?

XX.

"Then how much better, since our stake 's the same,
"Thou, loving like myself, should'st mount and stay
"To wait this battle's end, the lovely dame,
"Before she fly yet further on her way.
"The lady taken, we repeat our claim
"With naked faulchion to that peerless prey:
"Else by long toil I see not what we gain
"But simple loss and unrequited pain."

XXI.

The peer's proposal pleased the paynim well.
And so their hot contention was foregone;
And such fair truce replaced that discord fell,
So mutual wrongs forgot and mischief done;
That for departure seated in his sell,
On foot the Spaniard left not Aymon's son;
But him to mount his courser's crupper prayed;
And both united chased the royal maid.

XXII.

Oh! goodly truth in cavaliers of old!
Rivals they were, to different faith were bred.
Not yet the weary warriors' wounds were cold—
Still smarting from those strokes so fell and dread.
Yet they together ride by waste and wold,
And, unsuspecting, devious dingle thread.
Them, while four spurs infest his foaming sides,
Their courser brings to where the way divides.

XXIII.

And now the warlike pair at fault, for they
Knew not by which she might her palfrey goad,
(Since both, without distinction, there survey
The recent print of hoofs on either road),
Commit the chase to fortune. By this way
The paynim pricked, by that Rinaldo strode.
But fierce Ferrau, bewildered in the wood,
Found himself once again where late he stood.

XXIV.

Beside the water, where he stoop'd to drink,
And dropt the knightly helmet,—to his cost,
Sunk in the stream; and since he could not think
Her to retrieve, who late his hopes had crossed,
He, where the treasure fell, descends the brink
Of that swift stream, and seeks the morion lost.
But the casque lies so bedded in the sands,
'Twill ask no light endeavour at his hands.

XXV.

A bough he severs from a neighbouring tree,
And shreds and shapes the branch into a pole:
With this he sounds the stream, and anxiously
Fathoms, and rakes, and ransacks shelf and hole.
While angered sore at heart, and restless, he
So lingered, where the troubled waters roll,
Breast-high, from the mid river rose upright,
The apparition of an angry knight.

XXVI.

Armed at all points he was, except his head,
And in his better hand a helmet bore;
The very casque, which in the river's bed
Ferrau sought vainly, toiling long and sore.
Upon the Spanish knight he frowned, and said:
"Thou traitor to thy word, thou perjured Moor,
"Why grieve the goodly helmet to resign,
"Which, due to me long since, is justly mine?

XXVII.

" Remember, pagan, when thine arm laid low
" The brother of Angelica[9]. That knight
" Am I;—thy word was plighted then to throw
" After my other arms this helmet bright.
" If Fortune now compel thee to forego
" The prize, and do my will in thy despite,
" Grieve not at this, but rather grieve that thou
" Art found a perjured traitor to thy vow.

XXVIII.

" But if thou seek'st a helmet, be thy task
" To win and wear it more to thy renown.
" A noble prize were good Orlando's casque;
" Rinaldo's such, or yet a fairer crown;
" Almontes', or Mambrino's iron masque:
" Make one of these, by force of arms, thine own.
" And this good helm will fitly be bestowed
" Where (such thy promise) it has long been owed."

XXIX.

Bristled the paynim's every hair at view
Of that grim shade, uprising from the tide,
And vanished was his fresh and healthful hue,
While on his lips the half-formed accents died.
Next hearing Argalia, whom he slew,
(So was the warrior hight) that stream beside,
Thus his unknightly breach of promise blame,
He burned all over, flushed with rage and shame.

XXX.

Nor having time his falsehood to excuse,
And knowing well how true the phantom's lore,
Stood speechless; such remorse the words infuse.
Then by Lanfusa's life the warrior swore,
Never in fight, or foray would he use
Helmet but that which good Orlando bore
From Aspramont, where bold Almontes[10] paid
His life a forfeit to the christian blade.

XXXI.

And this new vow discharged more faithfully
Than the vain promise which was whilom plight;
And from the stream departing heavily,
Was many days sore vexed and grieved in sprite;
And still intent to seek Orlando, he
Roved wheresoe'er he hoped to find the knight.
A different lot befel Rinaldo; who
Had chanced another pathway to pursue.

XXXII.

For far the warrior fared not, ere he spied,
Bounding across the path, his gallant steed,
And, "stay, Bayardo mine," Rinaldo cried,
"Too cruel care the loss of thee does breed."
The horse for this returned not to his side,
Deaf to his prayer, but flew with better speed.
Furious, in chase of him, Rinaldo hies.
But follow we Angelica, who flies.

XXXIII.

Through dreary woods and dark the damsel fled,
By rude unharboured heath and savage height,
While every leaf or spray that rustled, bred
(Of oak, or elm, or beech), such new affright,
She here and there her foaming palfrey sped
By strange and crooked paths with furious flight;
And at each shadow, seen in valley blind,
Or mountain, feared Rinaldo was behind.

XXXIV.

As a young roe or fawn of fallow deer,
Who, mid the shelter of its native glade,
Has seen a hungry pard or tiger tear
The bosom of its bleeding dam, dismayed,
Bounds, through the forest green in ceaseless fear
Of the destroying beast, from shade to shade,
And at each sapling touched, amid its pangs,
Believes itself between the monster's fangs,

XXXV.

One day and night, and half the following day,
The damsel wanders wide, nor whither knows;
Then enters a deep wood, whose branches play,
Moved lightly by the freshening breeze which blows.
Through this two clear and murmuring rivers stray:
Upon their banks a fresher herbage grows;
While the twin streams their passage slowly clear,
Make music with the stones, and please the ear.

XXXVI.

Weening removed the way by which she wends,
A thousand miles from loathed Rinaldo's beat,
To rest herself a while the maid intends,
Wearied with that long flight and summer's heat.
She from her saddle 'mid spring flowers descends,
And takes the bridle from her courser fleet;
And loose along the river lets him pass,
Roving the banks in search of lusty grass.

XXXVII.

Behold! at hand a thicket she surveys
Gay with the flowering thorn and vermeil rose:
The tuft reflected in the stream which strays
Beside it, overshadowing oaks enclose.
Hollow within, and safe from vulgar gaze,
It seemed a place constructed for repose;
With boughs so interwoven, that the light
Pierced not the tangled screen, far less the sight.

XXXVIII.

Within soft moss and herbage form a bed;
And to delay and rest the traveller woo.
'Twas there her limbs the weary damsel spread,
Her eye-balls bathed in slumber's balmy dew.
But little time had eased her drooping head,
Ere, as she weened, a courser's tramp she knew.
Softly she rises, and the river near,
Armed cap-à-pè, beholds a cavalier.

XXXIX.

If friend or foe, she nothing comprehends,
(So hope and fear her doubting bosom tear)
And that adventure's issue mute attends,
Nor even with a sigh disturbs the air.
The cavalier upon the bank descends;
And sits so motionless, so lost in care,
(His visage propt upon his arm) to sight
Changed into senseless stone appeared the knight.

XL.

Pensive, above an hour, with drooping head,
He rested mute, ere he began his moan;
And then his piteous tale of sorrow said,
Lamenting in so soft and sweet a tone,
He in a tiger's breast had pity bred,
Or with his mournful wailings rent a stone.
And so he sighed and wept; like rivers flowed
His tears, his bosom like an Ætna glowed.

XLI.

" Thought which now makes me burn, now freeze with hate,
" Which gnaws my heart and rankles at its root!
" What 's left to me," he said, " arrived too late,
" While one more favoured bears away the fruit?
" Bare words and looks scarce cheered my hopeless state,
" And the prime spoils reward another's suit.
" Then since for me nor fruit nor blossom hangs,
" Why should I longer pine in hopeless pangs?

XLII.

" The virgin has her image in the rose "
" Sheltered in garden on its native stock,
" Which there in solitude and safe repose,
" Blooms unapproached by shepherd or by flock.
" For this earth teems, and freshening water flows,
" And breeze and dewy dawn their sweets unlock:
" With such the wishful youth his bosom dresses,
" With such the enamoured damsel braids her tresses.

XLIII.

" But wanton hands no sooner this displace
" From the maternal stem, where it was grown,
" Than all is withered; whatsoever grace
" It found with man or heaven; bloom, beauty, gone.
" The damsel who should hold in higher place
" Than light or life the flower which is her own,
" Suffering the spoiler's hand to crop the prize,
" Forfeits her worth in every other's eyes.

XLIV.

" And be she cheap with all except the wight
" On whom she did so large a boon bestow.
" Ah! false and cruel Fortune! foul despite!
" While others triumph, I am drown'd in woe.
" And can it be that I such treasure slight?
" And can I then my very life forego?
" No! let me die; 'twere happiness above
" A longer life, if I must cease to love."

XLV.

If any ask who made this sorrowing,
And pour'd into the stream so many tears,
I answer, it was fair Circassia's king [12],
That Sacripant, oppressed with amorous cares.
Love is the source from which his troubles spring,
The sole occasion of his pains and fears;
And he to her a lover's service paid,
Now well remembered by the royal maid.

XLVI.

He for her sake from Orient's farthest reign
Roved thither, where the sun descends to rest;
For he was told in India, to his pain,
That she Orlando followed to the west.
He after learned in France that Charlemagne
Secluded from that champion and the rest,
As a fit guerdon, mewed her for the knight
Who should protect the lilies best in fight.

XLVII.

The warrior in the field had been, and viewed,
Short time before, king Charlemagne's disgrace;
And vainly had Angelica pursued,
Nor of the damsel's footsteps found a trace.
And this is what the weeping monarch rued,
And this he so bewailed in doleful case:
Hence, into words his lamentations run,
Which might for pity stop the passing sun.

XLVIII.

While Sacripant laments him in this plight,
And makes a tepid fountain of his eyes;
And, what I deem not needful to recite,
Pours forth yet other plaints and piteous cries;
Propitious Fortune wills his lady bright
Should hear the youth lament him in such wise:
And thus a moment compassed what, without
Such chance, long ages had not brought about.

XLIX.

With deep attention, while the warrior weeps,
She marks the fashion of the grief and tears
And words of him, whose passion never sleeps;
Nor this the first confession which she hears.
But with his plaint her heart no measure keeps,
Cold as the column which the builder rears.
Like haughty maid, who holds herself above
The world, and deems none worthy of her love.

L.

But her from harm amid those woods to keep,
The damsel weened she might his guidance need;
For the poor drowning caitiff, who, chin-deep,
Implores not help, is obstinate indeed.
Nor will she, if she let the occasion sleep,
Find escort that will stand her in such stead:
For she that king by long experience knew,
Above all other lovers, kind and true.

LI.

But not the more for this the maid intends
To heal the mischief which her charms had wrought,
And for past ills to furnish glad amends
In that full bliss by pining lover sought.
To keep the king in play are all her ends,
His help by some device or fiction bought,
And having to her purpose taxed his daring,
To reassume as wont her haughty bearing.

LII.

An apparition bright and unforeseen,
She stood like Venus or Diana fair,
In solemn pageant, issuing on the scene
From out of shadowy wood or murky lair.
And "Peace be with you," cried the youthful queen,
"And God preserve my honour in his care,
"Nor suffer that you blindly entertain
"Opinion of my fame so false and vain!"

LIII.

Not with such wonderment a mother eyes,
With such excessive bliss the son she mourned;
As dead, lamented still with tears and sighs,
Since the thinned files without her boy returned.
—Not such her rapture as the king's surprise
And ecstasy of joy when he discerned
The lofty presence, cheeks of heavenly hue,
And lovely form which broke upon his view.

LIV.

He, full of fond and eager passion, pressed
Towards his Lady, his Divinity;
And she now clasped the warrior to her breast,
Who in Catày had haply been less free.
And now again the maid her thoughts addressed
Towards her native land and empery:
And feels, with hope revived, her bosom beat
Shortly to repossess her sumptuous seat.

LV.

Her chances all to him the damsel said,
Since he was eastward sent to Sericane
By her to seek the martial monarch's aid,
Who swayed the sceptre of that fair domain;
And told how oft Orlando's friendly blade
Had saved her from dishonour, death, and pain;
And how she so preserved her virgin flower
Pure as it blossomed in her natal hour.

LVI.

Haply the tale was true; yet will not seem
Likely to one of sober sense possessed:
But Sacripant, who waked from worser dream,
In all without a cavil acquiesced:
Since Love, who sees without one guiding gleam,
Spies in broad day but that which likes him best:
For one sign of the afflicted man's disease
Is to give ready faith to things which please.

LVII.

" If good Anglante's lord the prize forbore,
" Nor seized the fair occasion when he might,
" The loss be his, if Fortune never more
" Him to enjoy so fair a prize invite.
" To imitate that lord of little lore
" I think not," said, apart, Circassia's knight,
" To quit such proffered good, and, to my shame,
" Have but myself on after-thought to blame.

LVIII.

" No! I will pluck the fresh and morning rose,
" Which, should I tarry, may be overblown.
" To woman, (this my own experience shows),
" No deed more sweet or welcome can be done[15].
" Then, whatsoever scorn the damsel shows,
" Though she awhile may weep and make her moan,
" I will, unchecked by anger, false or true,
" Or sharp repulse, my bold design pursue."

LIX.

This said, he for the soft assault prepares,
When a loud noise within the greenwood shade
Beside him, rang in his astounded ears,
And sore against his will the monarch stayed.
He donned his helm (his other arms he wears),
Aye wont to rove in steel, with belted blade,
Replaced the bridle on his courser fleet,
Grappled his lance, and sprang into his seat.

LX.

With the bold semblance of a valiant knight,
Behold a warrior threads the forest hoar.
The stranger's mantle was of snowy white,
And white alike the waving plume he wore.
Balked of his bliss, and full of fell despite,
The monarch ill the interruption bore,
And spurred his horse to meet him in mid space,
With hate and fury glowing in his face.

LXI.

Him he defies to fight, approaching nigh,
And weens to make him stoop his haughty crest:
The other knight, whose worth I rate as high,
His warlike prowess puts to present test;
Cuts short his haughty threats and angry cry,
And spurs, and lays his levelled lance in rest.
In tempest wheels Circassia's valiant peer,
And at his foeman's head each aims his spear.

LXII.

Not brindled bulls or tawny lions spring
To forest warfare with such deadly will
As those two knights, the stranger and the king.
Their spears alike the opposing bucklers thrill:
The solid ground, at their encountering,
Trembles from fruitful vale to naked hill:
And well it was the mail in which they dressed
Their bodies was of proof, and saved the breast.

LXIII.

Nor swerved the chargers from their destined course;
Who met like rams, and butted head to head.
The warlike Saracen's ill-fated horse,
Well valued while alive, dropt short and dead:
The stranger's, too, fell senseless; but perforce
Was roused by rowel from his grassy bed.
That of the paynim king, extended straight,
Lay on his battered lord with all his weight.

LXIV.

Upright upon his steed, the knight unknown,
Who at the encounter horse and rider threw,
Deeming enough was in the conflict done,
Cares not the worthless warfare to renew;
But endlong by the readiest path is gone,
And measures, pricking frith and forest through,
A mile, or little less, in furious heat,
Ere the foiled Saracen regains his feet.

LXV.

As the bewildered and astonished clown
Who held the plough (the thunder storm o'erpast)
There, where the deafening bolt had beat him down,
Nigh his death-stricken cattle, wakes aghast,
And sees the distant pine without its crown[14],
Which he saw clad in leafy honours last;
So rose the paynim knight with troubled face,
The maid spectatress of the cruel case.

LXVI.

He sighs and groans, yet not for mischief sore
Endured in wounded arm or foot which bled;
But for mere shame, and never such before
Or after, dyed his cheek so deep a red,
And if he rued his fall, it grieved him more
His dame should lift him from his courser dead.
He speechless had remained, I ween, if she
Had not his prisoned tongue and voice set free.

LXVII.

"Grieve not," she said, "sir monarch, for thy fall;
"But let the blame upon thy courser be!
"To whom more welcome had been forage, stall,
"And rest, than further joust and jeopardy;
"And well thy foe the loser may I call,
"(Who shall no glory gain) for such is he
"Who is the first to quit his ground, if aught
"Angelica of fighting fields be taught."

LXVIII.

While she so seeks the Saracen to cheer,
Behold a messenger with pouch and horn,
On panting hackney!—man and horse appear
With the long journey, weary and forlorn.
He questions Sacripant, approaching near,
Had he seen warrior pass, by whom were borne
A shield and crest of white; in search of whom
Through the wide forest pricked the weary groom.

LXIX.

King Sacripant made answer, " As you see,
" He threw me here, and went but now his way:
" Then tell the warrior's name, that I may be
" Informed whose valour foiled me in the fray."
To him the groom,—" That which you ask of me
" I shall relate to you without delay:
" Know that you were in combat prostrate laid
" By the tried valour of a gentle maid.

LXX.

" Bold is the maid; but fairer yet than bold,
" Nor the redoubted virgin's name I veil:
" 'Twas Bradamant[15] who marred what praise of old
" Your prowess ever won with sword and mail."
This said, he spurred again, his story told,
And left him little gladdened by the tale.
He recks not what he says or does, for shame,
And his flushed visage kindles into flame.

LXXI.

After the woeful warrior long had thought
Upon his cruel case, and still in vain,
And found a woman his defeat had wrought,
For thinking but increased the monarch's pain,
He climbed the other horse, nor spake he aught;
But silently uplifted from the plain,
Upon the croup bestowed that damsel sweet,
Reserved to gladder use in safer seat.

LXXII.

Two miles they had not rode before they hear
The sweeping woods which spread about them, sound
With such loud crash and trample, far and near,
The forest seemed to tremble all around;
And shortly after see a steed appear,
With housings wrought in gold and richly bound;
Who clears the bush and stream, with furious force,
And whatsoever else impedes his course.

LXXIII.

" Unless the misty air," the damsel cries,
" And boughs deceive my sight, yon noble steed
" Is, sure, Bayardo[16], who before us flies,
" And parts the wood with such impetuous speed.
" —Yes, 'tis Bayardo's self I recognize.
" How well the courser understands our need!
" Two riders ill a foundered jade would bear,
" But hither speeds the horse to end that care."

LXXIV.

The bold Circassian lighted, and applied
His hand to seize him by the flowing rein,
Who, swiftly turning, with his heels replied,
For he like lightning wheeled upon the plain.
Woe to the king! but that he leaps aside,
For should he smite, he would not lash in vain.
Such are his bone and sinew, that the shock
Of his good heels had split a metal rock.

LXXV.

Then to the maid he goes submissively,
With gentle blandishment and humble mood;
As the dog greets his lord with frolic glee,
Whom, some short season past, he had not viewed.
For good Bayardo had in memory
Albracca, where her hands prepared his food[17],
What time the damsel loved Rinaldo bold;
Rinaldo, then ungrateful, stern, and cold.

LXXVI.

With her left hand she takes him by the bit,
And with the other pats his sides and chest:
While the good steed (so marvellous his wit),
Lamb-like, obeyed the damsel and caressed.
Meantime the king, who sees the moment fit,
Leapt up, and with his knees the courser pressed.
While on the palfrey, eased of half his weight,
The lady left the croup, and gained the seat.

LXXVII.

Then, as at hazard, she directs her sight,
Sounding in arms a man on foot espies,
And glows with sudden anger and despite;
For she in him the son of Aymon eyes.
Her more than life esteems the youthful knight,
While she from him, like crane from falcon, flies.
Time was the lady sighed, her passion slighted;
'Tis now Rinaldo loves, as ill requited.

LXXVIII.

And this effect two different fountains wrought,
Whose wonderous waters different moods inspire.
Both spring in Arden, with rare virtue fraught:
This fills the heart with amorous desire:
Who taste that other fountain are untaught
Their love, and change for ice their former fire.
Rinaldo drank the first, and vainly sighs;
Angelica the last, and hates and flies.

LXXIX.

Mixed with such secret bane the waters glide,
Which amorous care convert to sudden hate;
The maid no sooner had Rinaldo spied,
Than on her laughing eyes deep darkness sate:
And with sad mien and trembling voice she cried
To Sacripant, and prayed him not to wait
The near approach of the detested knight,
But through the wood with her pursue his flight.

LXXX.

To her the Saracen, with anger hot:
"Is knightly worship sunk so low in me,
"That thou should'st hold my valour cheap, and not
"Sufficient to make yonder champion flee?
"Already are Albracca's fights forgot,
"And that dread night I singly stood for thee?
"That night when I, though naked, was thy shield
"Against King Agrican and all his field?"

LXXXI.

She answers not, and knows not in her fear
What 'tis she does; Rinaldo is too nigh:
And from afar that furious cavalier
Threats the bold Saracen with angry cry,
As soon as the known steed and damsel dear,
Whose charms such flame had kindled, meet his eye.
But what ensued between the haughty pair
I in another canto shall declare.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1.

In the same strain of Roland will I tell.

Stanza ii. line 1.

I have used the name by which he is best known in French and English legends. He is called Orlando by Ariosto, and Rotolando by some of the more ancient romancers. His name and signature are said to have been seen in certain charters of Charlemagne. In the Latin Chronicles of the middle ages he is called Rutlandus and Ruitlandus.

2.

Good seed of Hercules give ear and deign.

Stanza iii. line 1.

The Cardinal Ippolito of Este, son of Hercules of Este, Duke of Ferrara.

3.

Record the good Rogero, valiant peer.

Stanza iv. line 3.

This Rogero, Ruggiero in the original, is supposed to be Rizieri of Risa, whose name is changed according to the customary transmutation of Venetian letters into their Tuscan equivalents, as *z* into *g*. He, however, is said to have flourished before the time of Charlemagne, and to have died

childless. His pedigree is given more at large in the *Innamorato*. (See the *Innamorato, book* ii.) The supposed descent of the family of Este from Rizieri, and their pretensions to be of the blood of Charlemagne, for Bradamant was the niece of that emperor, made Ariosto adopt Rogero as the real hero of his poem.

4.

Roland, who long the lady of Catay.

Stanza v. line 1.

Angelica, daughter of Galaphron, king of Cathay, the capital of which was Albracca.

5.

For bold Orlando and his cousin free,
Rinaldo.

Stanza viii. line 1.

Rinaldo, cousin to Orlando, is known by different names, as Renauld and Arnaud. He was eldest son of Amone, in Italian, Aymon, in French, of Monte Albano, or Mont Auban.

6.

Than half-clothed churl to win the cloth of red.

Stanza xi. line 4.

In the foot-race. Dante uses the same comparison in his Inferno, canto xv.

Poi si rivolse e parve di coloro
Che corrono a Verona 'l drappo verde
Per la campagna; e parve di costoro
Quegli che vince e non colui che perde.

With that he turned, and seemed as one of those
Who race upon Verona's spacious plain
For the green cloth; nor seemed of them who lose,
But he who the disputed prize will gain.

7.

But not from cruel snake more swiftly flies.

Stanza xi. line 5.

Imitated from Virgil's

Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem
Pressit humi nitens, trepidumque repente refugit,
Attollentem iras, et cærula colla tumentem.

8.

Here stood the fierce Ferrau in grisly plight.

Stanza xiv. line 1.

He was also called Ferraute and Ferracuto. He is said to have been slain by Orlando, who wounded him in the navel, the only vulnerable part about him. The story is continued from the Innamorato.

9.

The brother of Angelica. That knight, &c.

Stanza xxvii. line 2.

This too is the continuation of an old story, for which see the Innamorato. Argalia was brother to Angelica.

10.

From Aspramont, where bold Almontes paid.

Stanza xxx. line 7.

Almonte in the text, called by others Aimonte. For the rest; these stories, though "half told," develope themselves in the course of the poem.

11.

" *The virgin has her image in the rose.*"

Stanza xlii. line 1.

Translated, and with little variation, from Catullus's beautiful comparison, in his epithalamium on Manlius and Julia.

Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis,
Ignotus pecori, nullo contusus aratro;
Quem mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber
Multi illum pueri, multæ optavêre puellæ.
Idem quum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavêre puellæ.
Sic virgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est;
Quum castum amisit polluto corpore florem,
Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis.

12.

It was fair Circassia's king.

Stanza xlv. line 3.

Sacripant, who is one of Boiardo's *dramatis personæ*, figures more especially in the warfare,

" When Agrican, with all his northern powers,
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Galaphron; from thence to win
The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both paynim and the peers of Charlemagne."

PAR. REGAINED.

13.

" *To woman, (this my own experience shows),*
" *No deed more sweet or welcome can be done.*

Stanza lviii. lines 3 and 4.

Vim licet appelles, grata est vis illa puellis;
Quod juvat, invitæ sæpe dedisse volunt.

OVID.

14.

And sees the distant pine without its crown.

Stanza lxv. line 5.

An Italian commentator writes more than a page to prove that Ariosto must have meant *il pino grandissimo*, that is, the stone-pine, or *pinus pinea* of Linnæus, with a top like an umbrella; but has omitted the best reason for supposing so; *to wit*, that it is the only pine common in Italy.

15.

" *'Twas Bradamant.*

Stanza lxx. line 3.

Bradamant is also a character in the *Innamorato*, and her story, which forms one of the prettiest episodes in the work, is afterwards taken up where it was dropt by Boiardo.

16.

" *Is, sure, Bayardo.*

Stanza lxxiii. line 3.

Bayardo, the famous steed of Rinaldo, is said to have been found by Malagigi, the wizard knight, and cousin to Rinaldo, in a grotto, together with a suit of arms and the sword Fusberta, under the watch of a dragon, whom he charmed. Having obtained the prize, he bestowed it upon Rinaldo.

17.

Albracca, where her hands prepared his food.

Stanza lxxv. line 6.

Angelica, then in love with Rinaldo, through the influence of the Fountain of Love, and into whose hands Bayardo fell at Albracca, took care of him, and afterwards returned him to his master, who was among her enemies, he being then under the influence of the Fountain of Hate, as is seen in the text.

One source of love and one of burning hate.

The idea of these two fountains is perhaps taken from Claudian's picture of the gardens of Venus:

> Labuntur gemini fontes: hic dulcis; amarus
> Alter, et infusis corrumpit mella venenis;
> Unde Cupidineas armavit Fama sagittas.
>
> Two fountains glitter to the solar beam;
> This spouts a sweet, and that a bitter stream;
> Where Cupid dips his darts, as poets dream.

The idea of miraculous fountains, originating probably in the physical effects of some waters, (since a small substratum of truth is sufficient foundation for a lie), seems to have been a favourite classical fiction, as exemplified in the two springs in Bœotia, of which one was supposed to increase, and the other to take away, the memory. The belief in these was rife during the middle ages, and indeed extended to a later period; as we find the early discoverers reported, among other wonders, a fountain of youth.

It is possible, moreover, that with the idea of Claudian's two fountains may have been mixed up that of Cupid's two arrows, one of lead and the other of gold; of which the golden one was supposed to instil love, and the leaden hate.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.

A hermit parts, by means of hollow sprite,
The two redoubted rivals' dangerous play;
Rinaldo goes where Love and Hope invite,
But is dispatched by Charles another way:
Bradamont, seeking her devoted knight,
The good Rogero, nigh becomes the prey
Of Pinabel, who drops the damsel brave
Into the dungeon of a living grave.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO II.

I.

INJURIOUS LOVE, why still to mar accord
Between desires has been thy favourite feat?
Why does it please thee so, perfidious lord,
Two hearts should with a different measure beat?
Thou wilt not let me take the certain ford,
Dragging me where the stream is deep and fleet.
Her I abandon who my love desires,
While she who hates, respect and love inspires.

II.

Thou to Rinaldo show'st the damsel fair,
While he seems hideous to that gentle dame;
And he, who when the lady's pride and care,
Paid back with deepest hate her amorous flame,
Now pines, himself, the victim of despair,
Scorned in his turn, and his reward the same.
By the changed damsel in such sort abhorred,
She would choose death before that hated lord.

III.

He to the Pagan cries: "Forego thy theft,
"And down, false felon, from that pilfer'd steed;
"I am not wont to let my own be reft,
"And he who seeks it dearly pays the deed.
"More—I shall take from thee yon lovely weft;
"To leave thee such a prize were foul misdeed;
"And horse and maid, whose worth outstrips belief,
"Were ill, methinks, relinquished to a thief."

IV.

"Thou liest," the haughty Saracen retorts,
As proud, and burning with as fierce a flame,
"A thief thyself, if Fame the truth reports:
"But let good deeds decide our dubious claim,
"With whom the steed or damsel fair assorts:
"Best proved by valiant deeds: though, for the dame,
"That nothing is so precious, I with thee
"(Search the wide world throughout) may well agree."

V.

As two fierce dogs will sometimes stand at gaze,
Whom hate or other springs of strife inspire,
And grind their teeth, while each his foe surveys
With sidelong glance and eyes more red than fire.
Then either falls to bites, and hoarsely bays,
While their stiff bristles stand on end with ire:
So from reproach and menace to the sword
Pass Sacripant and Clermont's angry lord.

VI.

Thus kindling into wrath the knights engage:
One is on foot, the other on his horse:
Small gain to this; for inexperienced page
Would better rein his charger in the course.
For such Bayardo's sense, he will not wage
War with his master, or put out his force.
For voice, nor hand, nor manage, will he stir,
Rebellious to the rein or goading spur.

VII.

He, when the king would urge him, takes the rest,
Or, when he curbs him, runs in giddy rings;
And drops his head beneath his spreading chest,
And plays his spine, and runs an-end and flings.
And now the furious Saracen distressed,
Sees 'tis no time to tame the beast, and springs,
With one hand on the pummel, to the ground;
Clear of the restless courser at a bound.

VIII.

As soon as Sacripant, with well-timed leap,
Is from the fury of Bayardo freed,
You may believe the battle does not sleep
Between those champions, matched in heart and deed.
Their sounding blades such changeful measure keep,
The hammer-strokes of Vulcan with less speed
Descend in that dim cavern, where he heats,
And Jove's red thunders on his anvil beats.

IX.

Sometimes they lunge, then feign the thrust and parry;
Deep masters of the desperate game they play;
Or rise upon the furious stroke, and carry
Their swords aloft, or stoop and stand at bay.
Again they close, again exhausted tarry;
Now hide, now show themselves, and now give way,
And where one knight an inch of ground has granted,
His foeman's foot upon that inch is planted.

X.

When, lo! Rinaldo, now impatient grown,
Strikes full at Sacripant with lifted blade;
And he puts forth his buckler made of bone,
And well with strong and stubborn steel inlaid:
Though passing thick, Fusberta[2] cleaves it: groan
Greenwood, and covert close, and sunny glade.
The paynim's arm rings senseless with the blow,
And steel and bone, like ice, in shivers go.

XI.

When the fair damsel saw, with timid eye,
Such ruin follow from the faulchion's sway,
She, like the criminal, whose doom is nigh,
Changed her fair countenance through sore dismay,
And deemed that little time was left to fly
If she would not be that Rinaldo's prey,
Rinaldo loathed by her as much, as he
Doats on the scornful damsel miserably.

XII.

So turned her horse into the gloomy chase,
And drove him through rough path and tangled ally,
And oftentimes bent back her bloodless face,
And saw Rinaldo from each thicket sally.
Nor flying long had urged the frantic race,
Before she met a hermit in a valley.
Devotion in his aspect was expressed,
And his long beard descended on his breast.

XIII.

Wasted he was as much by fasts as age,
And on an ass was mounted, slow and sure;
His visage warranted that never sage
Had conscience more precise or passing pure.
Though in his arteries time had stilled the rage
Of blood, and spake him feeble and demure,
At sight of the delightful damsel, he
Was inly stirred for very charity.

XIV.

The lady prayed that kindly friar, that he
Would straight conduct her to some haven near,
For that she from the land of France might flee,
And never more of loathed Rinaldo hear.
The hermit, who was skilled in sorcery,
Ceased not to soothe the gentle damsel's fear.
And with the promise of deliverance, shook
His pocket, and drew forth a secret book.

XV.

This opened, quick and mighty marvel wrought;
For not a leaf is finished by the sage,
Before a spirit, by his bidding brought,
Waits his command in likeness of a page:
He, by the magic writ constrained and taught,
Hastes where the warriors face to face engage,
In the cool shade—but not in cool disport—
And steps between, and stops their battle short.

XVI.

"In courtesy," he cried, "let either show
"What his foe's death to either can avail,
"And what the guerdon conquest will bestow
"On him who in the battle shall prevail,
"If Roland, though he has not struck a blow,
"Or snapt in fight a single link of mail,
"To Paris-town conveys the damsel gay,
"Who has engaged you in this bitter fray.

XVII.

"Within an easy mile I saw the peer
"Pricking to Paris with that lady bright;
"Riding, in merry mood, with laugh and jeer,
"And mocking at your fierce and fruitless fight.
"Sure it were better, while they yet are near,
"To follow peer and damsel in their flight:
"For should he once in Paris place his prize
"The lady never more shall meet your eyes."

XVIII.

You might have seen those angry cavaliers
Change at the demon's tale for rage and shame;
And curse themselves as wanting eyes and ears,
To let their rival cheat them of the dame.
Towards his horse the good Rinaldo steers,
Breathing forth piteous sighs which seem of flame;
And, if he join Orlando—ere they part—
Swears in his fury he will have his heart.

XIX.

So, passing where the prompt Bayardo stood,
Leaps on his back, and leaves, as swift as wind,
Without farewell, his rival in the wood;
Much less invites him to a seat behind.
The goaded charger, in his heat of blood,
Forces whate'er his eager course confined,
Ditch, river, tangled thorn, or marble block;
He swims the river, and he clears the rock.

XX.

Let it not, sir, sound strangely in your ear
Rinaldo took the steed thus readily,
So long and vainly followed far and near;
For he, endued with reasoning faculty,
Had not in vice lured on the following peer,
But fled before his cherished lord, that he
Might guide him whither went the gentle dame,
For whom, as he had heard, he nursed a flame.

XXI.

For when Angelica, in random dread,
From the pavilion winged her rapid flight,
Bayardo marked the damsel as she fled,
His saddle lightened of Mount Alban's knight;
Who then on foot an equal combat sped,
Matched with a baron of no meaner might;
And chased the maid by woods, and floods, and strands,
In hopes to place her in the warrior's hands.

XXII.

And, with desire to bring him to the maid,
Gallopped before him still with rampant play;
But would not let his master mount, afraid
That he might make him take another way.
So luring on Rinaldo through the shade,
Twice brought him to his unexpected prey;
Twice foiled in his endeavour: once by bold
Ferrau; then Sacripant, as lately told.

XXIII.

Now good Bayardo had believed the tiding
Of that fair damsel, which produced the accord;
And in the devil's cunning tale confiding,
Renewed his wonted service to his lord.
Behold Rinaldo then in fury riding,
And pushing still his courser Paris-ward!
Though he fly fast, the champion's wishes go
Faster; and wind itself had seemed too slow.

XXIV.

At night Rinaldo rests his steed, with pain
To meet Anglante's lord he burned so sore;
And lent such credit to the tidings vain
Of the false courier of that wizard hoar:
And that day and the next, with flowing rein,
Rode, till the royal city rose before
His eyes; where Charlemagne had taken post,
With the sad remnant of his broken host.

XXV.

He, for he fears the Afric king's pursuit,
And sap and siege, upon his vassals calls
To gather in fresh victual, and recruit
And cleanse their ditches, and repair their walls.
And what may best annoy the foes, and suit
For safety, without more delay forestalls;
And plans an embassy to England, thence
To gather fresher forces for defence.

XXVI.

For he is bent again to try the fate
Of arms in tented field, though lately shamed;
And send Rinaldo to the neighbouring state
Of Britain, which was after England named[3].
Ill liked the Paladin to cross the strait;
Not that the people or the land he blamed,
But that King Charles was sudden; nor a day
Would grant the valiant envoy for delay.

XXVII.

Rinaldo never executed thing
Less willingly, prevented in his quest
Of that fair visage he was following,
Whose charms his heart had ravished from his breast.
Yet, in obedience to the christian king,
Prepared himself to do the royal hest.
To Calais the good envoy wends with speed,
And the same day embarks himself and steed.

XXVIII.

And there, in scorn of cautious pilot's skill
(Such his impatience to regain his home),
Launched on the doubtful sea, which boded ill,
And rolled its heavy billows, white with foam.
The wind, enraged that he opposed his will,
Stirred up the waves; and, 'mid the gathering gloom,
So the loud storm and tempest's fury grew,
That topmast-high the flashing waters flew.

XXIX.

The watchful mariners, in wary sort,
Haul down their mainsail[4], and attempt to wear;
And would put back in panic to the port,
Whence, in ill hour, they loosed with little care.
—"Not so," exclaims the wind, and stops them short,
So poor a penance will not pay the dare."
And when they fain would veer, with fiercer roar
Pelts back their reeling prow and blusters more.

XXX.

Starboard and larboard beats the fitful gale,
And never for a thought its ire assuages;
While the strained vessel drives with humble sail
Before the billows, as the tempest rages.
But I, who still pursue a varying tale,
Must leave awhile the Paladin, who wages
A weary warfare with the wind and flood;
To follow a fair virgin of his blood.

XXXI.

I speak of that famed damsel, by whose spear
O'erthrown, King Sacripant on earth was flung;
The worthy sister of the valiant peer,
From Beatrix and good Duke Aymon sprung.
By daring deeds and puissance no less dear
To Charlemagne and France: Since proved among
The first, her prowess, tried by many a test,
Equal to good Rinaldo's shone confessed.

XXXII.

A cavalier was suitor to the dame,
Who out of Afric passed with Agramant;
Rogero was his valiant father's name,
His mother was the child of Agolant[5].
And she, who not of bear or lion came,
Disdained not on the Child her love to plant.
Though cruel Fortune, ill their wishes meeting,
Had granted to the pair a single greeting.

XXXIII.

Alone thenceforth she sought her lover (he
Was named of him to whom he owed his birth),
And roved as safe as if in company
Of thousands, trusting in her single worth.
She having made the king of Circassy
Salute the visage of old mother earth,
Traversed a wood, and that wood past, a mountain;
And stopt at length beside a lovely fountain.

XXXIV.

Through a delicious mead the fountain-rill,
By ancient trees o'ershaded, glides away;
And him whose ear its pleasing murmurs fill,
Invites to drink, and on its banks to stay:
On the left side a cultivated hill
Excludes the fervors of the middle day.
As first the damsel thither turns her eyes,
A youthful cavalier she seated spies;

XXXV.

A cavalier, who underneath the shade,
Seems lost, as in a melancholy dream;
And on the bank, which gaudy flowers displayed,
Reposing, overhangs the crystal stream.
His horse beneath a spreading beech is laid,
And from a bough the shield and helmet gleam.
While his moist eyes, and sad and downcast air,
Speak him the broken victim of despair.

XXXVI.

Urged by the passion lodged in every breast,
A restless curiosity to know
Of others' cares, the gentle maid addressed
The knight, and sought the occasion of his woe.
And he to her his secret grief confessed,
Won by her gentle speech and courteous show,
And by that gallant bearing, which at sight,
Prepared who saw her for a nimble knight.

XXXVII.

" Fair sir, a band of horse and foot," he said,
" I brought to Charlemagne; and thither pressed,
" Where lie an ambush for Marsilius spread,
" Descending from the Pyrenean crest;
" And in my company a damsel led,
" Whose charms with fervid love had fired my breast.
" When, as we journey by Rhone's current, I
" A rider on a winged courser spy.

XXXVIII.

" The robber, whether he were man or shade,
" Or goblin damned to everlasting woe,
" As soon as he beheld my dear-loved maid,
" Like falcon, who, descending, aims its blow,
" Sank in a thought and rose; and soaring, laid
" Hands on his prize, and snatched her from below.
" So quick the rape, that all appeared a dream,
" Until I heard in air the damsel's scream.

XXXIX.

" The ravening kite so swoops and plunders, when
" Hovering above the sheltered yard, she spies
" A helpless chicken near unwatchful hen,
" Who vainly dins the thief with after cries.
" I cannot reach the mountain-robber's den,
" Compassed with cliffs, or follow one who flies.
" Besides, way-foundered is my weary steed,
" Who 'mid these rocks has wasted wind and speed.

XL.

" But I, like one who from his bleeding side
" Would liefer far have seen his heart out-torn,
" Left my good squadrons masterless, to ride
" Along the cliffs, and passes least forlorn;
" And took the way (love served me for a guide)
" Where it appeared the ruthless thief had born,
" Ascending to his den, the lovely prey,
" What time he snatched my hope and peace away.

XLI.

" Six days I rode, from morn to setting sun,
" By horrid cliff, by bottom dark and drear;
" And giddy precipice, where path was none,
" Nor sign, nor vestiges of man were near.
" At last a dark and barren vale I won,
" Where caverned mountains and rude cliffs appear:
" Where in the middle rose a rugged block,
" With a fair castle planted on the rock.

XLII.

" From far it shone like flame, and seemed not dight
" Of marble or of brick; and in my eye
" More wonderful the work, more fair to sight
" The walls appeared, as I approached more nigh.
" I, after, learned that it was built by sprite
" Whom potent fumes had raised and sorcery:
" Who on this rock its towers of steel did fix,
" Case-hardened in the stream and fire of Styx.

XLIII.

" Each polished turret shines with such a ray
" That it defies the mouldering rust and rain:
" The robber scours the country night and day,
" And after harbours in this sure domain.
" Nothing is safe which he would bear away;
" Pursued with curses and with threats in vain.
" There (fruitless every hope to foil his art)
" The felon keeps my love, oh! say my heart.

XLIV.

" Alas! what more is left me but to eye
" Her prison on that cliff's aërial crest?
" Like the she-fox, who hears her offspring cry,
" Standing beneath the ravening eagle's nest;
" And since she has not wings to rise and fly,
" Runs round the rugged rock with hopeless quest.
" So inaccessible the wild dominion
" To whatsoever has not plume and pinion.

XLV.

" While I so lingered where those rocks aspire,
" I saw a dwarf guide two of goodly strain;
" Whose coming added hope to my desire
" (Alas! desire and hope alike were vain)
" Both barons bold, and fearful in their ire:
" The one Gradasso, King of Sericane,
" The next, of youthful vigour, was a knight,
" Prized in the Moorish court, Rogero hight.

XLVI.

" The dwarf exclaimed, ' These champions will assay
' Their force with him who dwells on yonder steep,
' And by such strange and unattempted way
' Spurs the winged courser from his mountain-keep.
" And I to the approaching warriors say,
' Pity, fair sirs, the cruel loss I weep,
' And, as I trust, yon daring spoiler slain,
' Give my lost lady to my arms again.'

XLVII.

" Then how my love was ravished I make known,
" Vouching with bitter tears my deep distress.
" They proffer aid, and down the path of stone
" Which winds about the craggy mountain, press.
" While I, upon the summit left alone,
" Look on, and pray to God for their success.
" Beneath the wily wizard's castle strong
" Extends a little plain, two bow-shots long.

XLVIII.

" Arrived beneath the craggy keep, the two
" Contend which warrior shall begin the fight.
" When, whether the first lot Gradasso drew,
" Or young Rogero held the honor light,
" The King of Sericane his bugle blew,
" And the rock rang and fortress on the height;
" And, lo! apparelled for the fearful course,
" The cavalier upon his winged horse!

XLIX.

" Upwards, by little and by little, springs
" The winged courser, as the pilgrim crane
" Finds not at first his balance and his wings,
" Running and scarcely rising from the plain;
" But when the flock is launched and scattered, flings
" His pinions to the wind, and soars amain.
" So straight the necromancer's upward flight,
" The eagle scarce attempts so bold a height.

L.

" When it seems fit, he wheels his courser round,
" Who shuts his wings, and falling from the sky,
" Shoots like a well-trained falcon to the ground,
" Who sees the quarry, duck or pigeon, fly:
" So, through the parting air, with whizzing sound,
" With rested lance, he darted from on high;
" And while Gradasso scarcely marks the foe
" He hears him swooping near, and feels the blow.

LI.

" The wizard on Gradasso breaks his spear,
" He wounds the empty air, with fury vain.
" This in the feathered monster breeds no fear;
" Who to a distance shifts, and swoops again.
" While that encounter made the Alfana rear,
" Thrown back upon her haunches, on the plain.
" The Alfana that the Indian monarch rode,
" The fairest was that ever man bestrode[6].

LII.

" Up to the starry sphere with swift ascent
" The wizard soars, then pounces from the sky,
" And strikes the young Rogero, who, intent
" Upon Gradasso, deems no danger nigh.
" Beneath the wizard's blow the warrior bent,
" Which made some deal his generous courser ply;
" And when to smite the shifting foe he turned,
" Him in the sky, and out of reach discerned.

LIII.

" His blows Rogero, now Gradasso, bruise
" On forehead, bosom, back, or flanks, between;
" While he the warrior's empty blows eschews,
" Shifting so quickly that he scarce is seen.
" Now this, now that, the wizard seems to choose,
" The monster makes such spacious rings and clean,
" While the enchanter so deceives the knights,
" They view him not, and know not whence he smites.

LIV.

" Between the two on earth and him o' the sky,
" Until that hour the warfare lasted there,
" Which, spreading wide its veil of dusky dye,
" Throughout the world, discolours all things fair.
" What I beheld, I say; I add not, I,
" A tittle to the tale; yet scarcely dare
" To tell to other what I stood and saw;
" So strange it seems, so passing Nature's law.

LV.

" Well covered in a goodly silken case,
" He, the celestial warrior, bore his shield;
" But why delayed the mantle to displace
" I know not, and its lucid orb concealed.
" Since this no sooner blazes in his face,
" Than his foe tumbles dazzled on the field;
" And while he, like a lifeless body, lies,
" Becomes the necromancer's helpless prize.

LVI.

" Like carbuncle, the magic buckler blazed,
" No glare was ever seen which shone so bright:
" Nor could the warriors choose but fall, amazed
" And blinded by the clear and dazzling light.
" I, too, that from a distant mountain gazed,
" Fell senseless; and when I regained my sight,
" After long time, saw neither knights nor page,
" Nor aught beside a dark and empty stage.

LVII.

" This while the fell enchanter, I supposed,
" Dragged both the warriors to his prison-cell;
" And by strange virtue of the shield disclosed,
" I from my hope and they from freedom fell:
" And thus I to the turrets, which enclosed
" My heart, departing, bade a last farewell.
" Now sum my griefs, and say if love combine
" Other distress or grief to match with mine."

LVIII.

The knight relapsed into his first disease,
After his melancholy tale was done.
This was Count Pinabel, the Maganzese,
Anselmo d' Altaripa's faithless son.
He, where the blood ran foul through all degrees,
Disdained to be the only virtuous one;
Nor played a simple part among the base,
Passing in vice the villains of his race.

LIX.

With aspect changing still, the beauteous dame
Hears what the mournful Maganzese narrates;
And, at first mention of Rogero's name,
Her radiant face with eager joy dilates.
But, full of pity, kindles into flame
As Pinabel his cruel durance states.
Nor finds she, though twice told, the story stale;
But makes him oft repeat and piece his tale.

LX.

And, after, when she deemed that all was clear,
Cried to the knight, " Repose upon my say.
" To thee may my arrival well be dear,
" And thou as fortunate account this day.
" Straight wend me to the keep, sir cavalier,
" Which holds a jewel of so rich a ray:
" Nor shalt thou grudge thy labour and thy care,
" If envious Fortune do but play me fair."

LXI.

The knight replied, " Then nought to me remains
" But that I yonder mountain-passes show;
" And sure 'tis little loss to lose my pains,
" Where every thing is lost I prize below.
" But you would climb yon cliffs, and for your gains
" Will find a prison-house; and be it so!
" Whate'er betide you, blame yourself alone;
" You go forewarned to meet a fate foreshown."

LXII.

So said, the cavalier remounts his horse,
And serves the gallant damsel as a guide;
Who is prepared Rogero's gaol to force,
Or to be slain, or in his prison stied.
When lo! a messenger, in furious course,
Called to the dame to stay, and rode and cried.
This was the post who told Circassia's lord
What valiant hand had stretched him on the sward.

LXIII.

The courier, who so plied his restless heel,
News of Narbonne and of Montpelier bore:
How both had raised the standard of Castile,
All Acquamorta siding with the Moor;
And how Marseilles' disheartened men appeal
To her, who should protect her straightened shore;
And how, through him, her citizens demand
Counsel and comfort at their captain's hand.

LXIV.

This goodly town, with many miles of plain,
Which lie 'twixt Var and Rhone, upon the sea,
To her was given by royal Charlemagne:
Such trust he placed in her fidelity.
Still wont with wonder on the tented plain
The prowess of that valiant maid to see.
And now the panting courier, as I said,
Rode from Marseilles to ask the lady's aid.

LXV.

Whether or not she should the call obey,
The youthful damsel doubts some little space;
Strong in one balance Fame and Duty weigh,
But softer thoughts both Fame and Duty chase:
And she, at length, resolved the emprize to assay,
And free Rogero from the enchanted place:
Or, should her valour in the adventure fail,
Would with the cherished lover share his jail.

LXVI.

And did with such excuse that post appay,
He was contented on her will to wait:
Then turned the bridle to resume her way
With Pinabel, who seemed no whit elate.
Since of that line he knows the damsel gay,
Held in such open and such secret hate;
And future trouble to himself foresees,
Were he detected as a Maganzese.

LXVII.

For 'twixt Maganza's and old Clermont's line
There was an ancient and a deadly feud:
And oft to blows the rival houses came,
And oft in civil blood their hands embrued.
And hence some treason to this gentle dame
In his foul heart, the wicked County brewed;
Or, as the first occasion served, would stray
Out of the road, and leave her by the way.

LXVIII.

And so the traitor's troubled fancy rack
Fear, doubt, and his own native, rancorous mood,
That unawares he issued from the track,
And found himself within a gloomy wood:
Where a rough mountain reared its shaggy back,
Whose stony peak above the forest stood;
The daughter of Dordona's duke* behind,
Dogging his footsteps through the thicket blind.

* Bradamant.

LXIX.

He, when he saw himself within the brake,
Thought to abandon his unweeting foe;
And to the dame—"'Twere better that we make
"For shelter ere the gathering darkness grow;
"And, yonder mountain past, (save I mistake)
"A tower is seated in the vale below.
"Do you expect me then, while from the peak
"I measure the remembered place I seek."

LXX.

So said, he pushed his courser up the height
Of that lone mountain; in his evil mind
Revolving, as he went, some scheme or sleight
To rid him of the gentle dame behind.
When lo! a rocky cavern met his sight,
Amid those precipices dark and blind:
Its sides descended thirty yards and more,
Worked smooth, and at the bottom was a door.

LXXI.

A void was at the bottom, where a wide
Portal conducted to an inner room:
From thence a light shone out on every side,
As of a torch illumining the gloom.
Fair Bradamant pursued her faithless guide,
Suspended there, and pondering on her doom:
And came upon the felon where he stood,
Fearing lest she might lose him in the wood.

LXXII.

When her approach the County's first intent
Made vain, the wily traitor sought to mend
His toils, and some new stratagem invent
To rid her thence, or bring her to her end.
And so to meet the approaching lady went,
And showed the cave, and prayed her to ascend;
And said that in its bottom he had seen
A gentle damsel of bewitching mien;

LXXIII.

Who, by her lovely semblance and rich vest,
Appeared a lady of no mean degree;
But melancholy, weeping, and distressed,
As one who pined there in captivity;
And that when he towards the entrance pressed,
To learn who that unhappy maid might be,
One on the melancholy damsel flew,
And her within that inner cavern drew.

LXXIV.

The beauteous Bradamant, who was more bold
Than wary, gave a ready ear; and, bent
To help the maid, imprisoned in that hold,
Sought but the means to try the deep descent.
Then, looking round, descried an elm-tree old,
Which furnished present means for her intent:
And from the tree, with boughs and foliage stored,
Lopt a long branch, and shaped it with her sword.

LXXV.

The severed end she to the count commended,
Then, grasping it, hung down that entrance steep,
With her feet foremost, by her arms suspended:
When asking if she had the skill to leap,
The traitor, with a laugh, his hands extended,
And plunged his helpless prey into the deep.
"And thus," exclaimed the ruffian, "might I speed
"With thee each sucker of thy cursed seed!"

LXXVI.

But not, as was the will of Pinabel,
Such cruel lot fair Bradamant assayed;
For striking on the bottom of the cell,
The stout elm-bough so long her weight upstayed,
That, though it split and splintered where it fell,
It broke her fall, and saved the gentle maid.
Some while astounded there the lady lay,
As the ensuing canto will display.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1.

A thief thyself, if Fame the truth reports.

Stanza iv. line 3.

Such accusations are frequent in the *Innamorato*, and seem, as well as the adventure in the Fata Morgana's garden, where Rinaldo's rapacious conduct is contrasted with the disinterestedness of Orlando, to justify Sancho in stigmatizing the son of Aymon and his followers as "greater thieves than Cacus." In fact, *Renaud de Montauban*, or Rinaldo di Mont' Albano, appears to have been the governor of a fortress on the Spanish frontier, and was probably distinguished by what may be considered as the most characteristic attribute of a borderer. Stripped of the gaudier trappings with which romance has invested him, he was, perhaps, much the same sort of person as a distinguished modern author has exhibited to us in the Scotts and Musgraves of the Border Minstrelsy.

2.

Though passing thick, Fusberta cleaves it.

Stanza x. line 5.

Fusberta is the name of Rinaldo's sword. See the *Innamorato, passim.*

3.

Of Britain, which was after England named.

Stanza xxvi. line 4.

This line is here in its proper place; but it is odd enough that Machiavel should have given this obvious piece of antiquarian lore in his Florentine History. The words in which it is expressed are (if I recollect rightly) the same in Machiavel's prose and Ariosto's verse.

4.

Haul down their mainsail, &c.

Stanza xxix. line 2.

If Ariosto sometimes appears less exact in his description of naval matters than in other points, I am less inclined to attribute his supposed errors to the fear he is reported to have suffered on shipboard (considering that he had served by sea as well as by land), than to the alteration which has taken place in the construction and equipment of vessels since his time, the peculiar nature of an inland sea, and the modes of navigation which are suited to such vessels and such seas. Thus, the mainsail, hauled down, was, probably, an after sail, which will explain the manœuvre as facilitating the vessel's wearing. The quick shiftings of the wind which follow are common characteristics of the Mediterranean.

5.

Rogero was his valiant father's name,
His mother was the child of Agolant.

Stanza xxxii. lines 3 and 4.

For the story of the father and mother, see the *Orlando Innamorato.*

6.

The Alfana that the Indian monarch rode
The fairest was that ever man bestrode.

Stanza li. lines 7 and 8.

This was the favourite mare of Gradasso; for which also see the *Innamorato passim.*

7.

Like a lifeless body lies.

Stanza lv. line 7.

Ariosto, who, like most successful poets, was a free borrower, is indebted to Dante for the original line, of which this is a translation:

E caddi come un corpo morto cade.

L'Inferno, canto v.

The first line, indeed, of his first stanza, so often altered, is a close parody of a verse in the Purgatorio:

Le donne e i cavalier, gli affanni e gli agi.

Il Purgatorio, canto xiv.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

Restored to sense, the beauteous Bradamant
Finds sage Melissa in the vaulted tomb,
And hears from her of many a famous plant
And warrior, who shall issue from her womb.
Next, to release Rogero from the haunt
Of old Atlantes, learns how from the groom,
Bruncllo light, his virtuous ring to take;
And thus the knight's and others' fetters break.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO III.

I.

Who will vouchsafe me voice that shall ascend
As high as I would raise my noble theme?
Who will afford befitting words, and lend
Wings to my verse, to soar the pitch I scheme?
Since fiercer fire for such illustrious end,
Than what was wont, may well my song beseem.
For this fair portion to my lord is due
Which sings the sires from whom his lineage grew.

II.

Than whose fair line, 'mid those by heavenly grace
Chosen to minister this earth below,
You see not, Phœbus, in your daily race,
One that in peace or war doth fairer show;
Nor lineage that hath longer kept its place;
And still shall keep it, if the lights which glow
Within me, but aright inspire my soul,
While the blue heaven shall turn about the pole.

III.

But should I seek at full its worth to blaze,
Not mine were needful, but that noble lyre
Which sounded at your touch the thunderer's praise,
What time the giants sank in penal fire.
Yet should you instruments, more fit to raise
The votive work, bestow, as I desire,
All labour and all thought will I combine,
To shape and shadow forth the great design.

IV.

Till when, this chisel may suffice to scale
The stone, and give my lines a right direction;
And haply future study may avail,
To bring the stubborn labour to perfection.
Return we now to him, to whom the mail
Of hawberk, shield, and helm, were small protection:
I speak of Pinabel the Maganzeze,
Who hopes the damsel's death, whose fall he sees.

V.

The wily traitor thought that damsel sweet
Had perished on the darksome cavern's floor,
And with pale visage hurried his retreat
From that, through him contaminated door.
And, thence returning, clomb into his seat:
Then, like one who a wicked spirit bore,
To add another sin to evil deed,
Bore off with him the warlike virgin's steed.

VI.

Leave we sometime the wretch who, while he layed
Snares for another, wrought his proper doom;
And turn we to the damsel he betrayed,
Who had nigh found at once her death and tomb.
She, after rising from the rock, dismayed
At her shrewd fall, and gazing through the gloom,
Beheld and passed that inner door, which gave
Entrance to other and more spacious cave.

VII.

For the first cavern in a second ended,
Fashioned in form of church, and large and square;
With roof by cunning architect extended
On shafts of alabaster rich and rare.
The flame of a clear-burning lamp ascended
Before the central altar; and the glare,
Illuminating all the space about,
Shone through the gate, and lit the cave about.

VIII.

Touched with the sanctifying thoughts which wait
On worthy spirit in a holy place,
She prays with eager lips, and heart elate,
To the Disposer of all earthly grace:
And, kneeling, hears a secret wicket grate
In the opposing wall; whence, face to face,
A woman issuing forth, the maid addresses,
Barefoot, ungirt, and with dishevelled tresses.

IX.

" O generous Bradamant," the matron cried,
" Know thine arrival in this hallowed hold
" Was not unauthorized of heavenly guide:
" And the prophetic ghost of Merlin told,
" Thou to this cave shouldst come by path untried,
" Which covers the renowned magician's mould.
" And here have I long time awaited thee,
" To tell what is the heavens' pronounced decree.

X.

" This is the ancient memorable cave
" Which Merlin[1], that enchanter sage, did make:
" Thou may'st have heard how that magician brave
" Was cheated by the Lady of the Lake.
" Below, beneath the cavern, is the grave
" Which holds his bones; where, for that lady's sake,
" His limbs (for such her will) the wizard spread.
" Living he laid him there, and lies there dead.

XI.

" Yet lives the spirit of immortal strain;
" Lodged in the enchanter's corpse, till to the skies
" The trumpet call it, or to endless pain,
" As it with dove or raven's wing shall rise.
" Yet lives the voice, and thou shalt hear how plain
" From its sepulchral case of marble cries:
" Since this has still the past and future taught
" To every wight that has its counsel sought.

XII.

" Long days have passed since I from distant land
" My course did to this cemetery steer,
" That in the solemn mysteries I scanned,
" Merlin to me the truth should better clear;
" And having compassed the design I planned,
" A month beyond, for thee, have tarried here;
" Since Merlin, still with certain knowledge summing
" Events, prefixed this moment for thy coming."

XIII.

The daughter of Duke Aymon stood aghast,
And silent listened to the speech; while she
Knew not, sore marvelling at all that passed,
If 'twere a dream or a reality.
At length, with modest brow, and eyes down-cast,
Replied (like one that was all modesty),
" And is this wrought for me? and have I merit
" Worthy the workings of prophetic spirit?"

XIV.

And full of joy the adventure strange pursues,
Moving with ready haste behind the dame,
Who brings her to the sepulchre which mews
The bones and spirit, erst of Merlin's name.
The tomb, of hardest stone which masons use,
Shone smooth and lucid, and as red as flame.
So that although no sun-beam pierced the gloom,
Its splendour lit the subterraneous room.

XV.

Whether it be the native operation
Of certain stones, to shine like torch i' the dark,
Or whether force of spell or fumigation,
(A guess that seems to come more near the mark)
Or sign made under mystic constellation,
The blaze that came from the sepulchral ark
Discovered sculpture, colour, gems, and gilding,
And whatsoever else adorned the building.

XVI.

Scarcely had Bradamant above the sill
Lifted her foot, and trod the secret cave,
When the live spirit, in clear tones that thrill,
Addressed the martial virgin from the grave;
" May Fortune, chaste and noble maid, fulfil
" Thine every wish!" exclaimed the wizard brave,
" Since from thy womb a princely race shall spring,
" Whose name through Italy and earth shall ring.

XVII.

" The noble blood derived from ancient Troy[2],
" Mingling in thee its two most glorious streams,
" Shall be the ornament, and flower, and joy,
" Of every lineage on which Phœbus beams,
" Where genial stars lend warmth, or cold annoy,
" Where Indus, Tagus, Nile, or Danube gleams;
" And in thy progeny and long drawn line
" Shall marquises, counts, dukes, and Cæsars shine.

XVIII.

" Captains and cavaliers shall spring from thee,
" Who both by knightly lance and prudent lore,
" Shall once again to widowed Italy
" Her ancient praise and fame in arms restore;
" And in her realms just lords shall seated be,
" (Such Numa and Augustus were of yore),
" Who with their government, benign and sage,
" Shall re-create on earth the golden age.

XIX.

" Then, that the will of Heaven be duly brought
" To a fair end through thee, in fitting date,
" Which from the first to bless thy love has wrought,
" And destined young Ruggero for thy mate,
" Let nothing interpose to break that thought,
" But boldly tread the path prescribed by fate;
" Nor let aught stay thee till the thief be thrown
" By thy good lance, who keeps thee from thine own."

XX.

Here Merlin ceased, that for the solemn feat
Melissa might prepare with fitting spell,
To show bold Bradamant, in aspect meet,
The heirs who her illustrious race should swell.
Hence many sprites she chose; but from what seat
Evoked, I know not, or if called from hell:
And gathered in one place (so bade the dame),
In various garb and guise the shadows came.

XXI.

This done, into the church she called the maid,
Where she had drawn a magic ring, as wide
As might contain the damsel, prostrate laid;
With the full measure of a palm beside.
And on her head, lest spirit should invade,
A pentacle for more assurance tied[3].
So bade her hold her peace, and stand and look,
Then read, and schooled the demons from her book.

XXII.

Lo! forth of that first cave what countless swarm
Presses upon the circle's sacred round,
But, when they would the magic rampart storm,
Finds the way barred as if by fosse or mound;
Then back the rabble turns of various form;
And when it thrice with bending march has wound
About the circle, troops into the cave,
Where stands that beauteous urn, the wizard's grave.

XXIII.

"To tell at large the puissant acts and worth,
"And name of each who, figured in a sprite,
"Is present to our eyes before his birth,"
Said sage Melissa to the damsel bright;
"To tell the deeds which they shall act on earth,
"Were labour not to finish with the night.
"Hence I shall call few worthies of thy line,
"As time and fair occasion shall combine.

XXIV.

" See yonder first-born of thy noble breed,
" Who well reflects thy fair and joyous face;
" He, first of thine and of Rogero's seed [4],
" Shall plant in Italy thy generous race.
" In him behold who shall distain the mead,
" And his good sword with blood of Pontier base;
" The mighty wrong chastised, and traitor's guilt,
" By whom his princely father's blood was spilt.

XXV.

" By him King Desiderius shall be pressed [5],
" The valiant leader of the Lombard horde:
" And of the fiefs of Calaon and Este;
" For this imperial Charles shall make him lord.
" Hubert [6], thy grandson, comes behind; the best
" Of Italy, with arms and belted sword:
" Who shall defend the church from barbarous foes,
" And more than once assure her safe repose.

XXVI.

" Alberto next, unconquered captain, see [7],
" Whose trophies shall so many fanes array.
" Hugh, the bold son, is with the sire, and he
" Shall conquer Milan, and the snakes display.
" Azo, that next approaching form shall be,
" And, his good brother dead, the Insubri sway [8].
" Lo! Albertazo! by whose rede undone [9],
" See Berengarius banished, and his son.

XXVII.

" With him shall the imperial Otho join
" In wedlock worthily his daughter fair.
" And lo! another Hugh! O noble line[10]!
" O! sire succeeded by an equal heir!
" He, thwarting with just cause their ill design,
" Shall trash the Romans' pride who overbear;
" Shall from their hands the sovereign pontiff take,
" With the third Otho, and their leaguer break.

XXVIII.

" See Fulke, who to his brother will convey[11]
" All his Italian birth-right, and command
" To take a mighty dukedom far away
" From his fair home, in Almayn's northern land.
" There he the house of Saxony shall stay,
" And prop the ruin with his saving hand;
" This in his mother's right he shall possess,
" And with his progeny maintain and bless.

XXIX.

" More famed for courtesy than warlike deed,
" Azo the second, he who next repairs![12]
" Bertoldo and Albertazo are his seed:
" And, lo! the father walks between his heirs.
" By Parma's walls I see the Germans bleed,
" Their second Henry quelled; such trophy bears
" The one renowned in story's future page:
" The next shall wed Matilda, chaste and sage.

XXX.

" His virtues shall deserve so fair a flower,
" (And in his age, I wot, no common grace)
" To hold the half of Italy in dower,
" With that descendant of first Henry's race.
" Rinaldo shall succeed him in his power[13],
" Pledge of Bertoldo's wedded love, and chase
" Fierce Frederick Barbarossa's hireling bands;
" Saving the church from his rapacious hands.

XXXI.

" Another Azo rules Verona's town[14],
" With its fair fields; and two great chiefs this while.
" (One wears the papal, one the imperial crown*),
" The baron, Marquis of Ancona style.
" But to show all who rear the gonfalon
" Of the consistory, amid that file,
" Were task too long; as long to tell each deed
" Achieved for Rome by thy devoted seed.

XXXII.

" See Fulke and Obyson[15], more Azos, Hughs!
" Both Henrys!—mark the father and his boy.
" Two Guelphs: the first fair Umbria's land subdues[16],
" And shall Spoleto's ducal crown enjoy.
" Behold the princely phantom that ensues,
" Shall turn fair Italy's long grief to joy;
" I speak of the fifth Azo of thy strain[17],
" By whom shall Ezelin be quelled and slain.

* Otho IV. Honorius II.

XXXIII.

" Fierce Ezelin, that most inhuman lord,
" Who shall be deemed by men a child of hell,
" And work such evil, thinning with the sword
" Who in Ausonia's wasted cities dwell;
" Rome shall no more her Anthony record,
" Her Marius, Sylla, Nero, Cajus fell.
" And this fifth Azo shall to scathe and shame
" Put Frederick, second Cæsar of the name*.

XXXIV.

" He, with his better sceptre well contented,
" Shall rule the city, seated by the streams[18],
" Where Phœbus to his plaintive lyre lamented
" The son, ill-trusted with the father's beams;
" Where Cygnus spread his pinions, and the scented
" Amber was wept, as fabling poet dreams.
" To him such honour shall the church decree;
" Fit guerdon of his works, and valour's fee.

XXXV.

" But does no laurel for his brother twine[19],
" Aldobrandino, who will carry cheer
" To Rome (when Otho, with the Ghibelline,
" Into the troubled capital strikes fear),
" And make the Umbri and Piceni sign
" Their shame, and sack the cities far and near;
" Then hopeless to relieve the sacred hold,
" Sue to the neighbouring Florentine for gold:

* The Emperor Frederick the Second.

XXXVI.

" And trust a noble brother (b) his hands,
" Boasting no dearer pledge, the pact to bind:
" And next, victorious o'er the German bands,
" Give his triumphant onsigns to the wind:
" To the afflicted church restore her lands,
" And take due vengeance of Celano's kind.
" Then die, cut off in manhood's early flower,
' Beneath the banners of the Papal power?

XXXVII.

" He, dying, leaves his brother Azo heir
" Of Pesaro and fair Ancona's reign,
" And all the cities which 'twixt Tronto are[20],
" And green Isauro's stream, from mount to main;
" With other heritage, more rich and rare,
" Greatness of mind, and faith without a stain.
" All else is Fortune's in this mortal state;
" But Virtue soars beyond her love and hate.

XXXVIII.

" In good Rinaldo equal worth shall shine[21],
" (Such is the promise of his early fire)
" If such a hope of thine exalted line,
" Dark Fate and Fortune wreck not in their ire.
" Alas! from Naples in this distant shrine,
" Naples, where he is hostage for his sire,
" His dirge is heard: A stripling of thy race,
" Young Obyson, shall fill his grandsire's place[22].

XXXIX.

"This lord to his dominion shall unite
" Gay Reggio, joined to Modena's bold land.
" And his redoubted valour lend such light,
" The willing people call him to command.
" Sixth of the name, his Azo rears upright[23]
" The church's banner in his noble hand:
" Fair Adria's fief to him in dower shall bring
" The child of second Charles, Sicilia's king.

XL.

" Behold in yonder friendly group agreed,
" Many fair princes of illustrious name;
" Obyson, Albert famed for pious deed,
" Aldobrandino, Nicholas the lame[24].
" But we may pass them by, for better speed,
" Faenza conquered, and their feats and fame;
" With Adria (better held and surer gain)
" Which gives her title to the neighbouring main:

XLI.

" And that fair town, whose produce is the rose[25],
" The rose which gives it name in Grecian speech:
" That, too, which fishy marshes round enclose[26],
" And Po's two currents threat with double breach;
" Whose townsmen loath the lazy calm's repose,
" And pray that stormy waves may lash the beach.
" I pass, mid towns and towers, a countless store,
" Argenta, Lugo, and a thousand more.

XLII.

" See Nicholas, whom in his tender age[27],
" The willing people shall elect their lord;
" He who shall laugh to scorn the civil rage
" Of the rebellious Tideus and his horde;
" Whose infantine delight shall be to wage
" The mimic fight, and sweat with spear and sword:
" And through the discipline such nurture yields,
" Shall flourish as the flower of martial fields.

XLIII.

" By him rebellious plans are overthrown,
" And turned upon the rash contriver's head;
" And so each stratagem of warfare blown,
" That vainly shall the cunning toils be spread.
" To the third Otho this too late is known,
" Of Parma and the pleasant Reggio dread;
" Who shall by him be spoiled in sudden strife,
" Of his possessions and his wretched life.

XLIV.

" And still the fair dominion[28] shall increase,
" And without wrong its spreading bounds augment;
" Nor its glad subjects violate the peace,
" Unless provoked some outrage to resent,
" And hence its wealth and welfare shall not cease;
" And the Divine Disposer be content
" To let it flourish (such his heavenly love!)
" While the celestial spheres revolve above.

XLV.

" Lo! Lionel! lo! Borso great and kind[29]!
" First duke of thy fair race, his realm's delight;
" Who reigns secure, and shall more triumphs find
" In peace, than warlike princes win in fight.
" Who struggling Fury's hands shall tie behind
" Her back, and prison Mars, removed from sight.
" His fair endeavours bent to bless and stay
" The people, that his sovereign rule obey.

XLVI.

" Lo! Hercules, who may reproach his neighbour[30],
" With foot half burnt, and halting gait and slow,
" That at Budrìo, with protecting sabre,
" He saved his troops from fatal overthrow;
" Not that, for guerdon of his glorious labour,
" He should distress and vex him as a foe;
" Chased into Barco. It were hard to say,
" If most he shine in peace or martial fray.

XLVII.

" Lucania, Puglia, and Calabria's strand,
" Shall with the rumour of his prowess ring:
" Where he shall strive in duel, hand to hand[31],
" And gain the praise of Catalonia's king.
" Him, with the wisest captains of the land
" His worth shall class; such fame his actions bring:
" And he the fief shall win like valiant knight,
" Which thirty years before was his of right.

XLVIII.

" To him his grateful city owes a debt,
" The greatest subjects to their lord can owe;
" Not that he moves her from a marsh, to set
" Her stones, where Ceres' fruitful treasures grow.
" Nor that he shall enlarge her bounds, nor yet
" That he shall fence her walls against the foe;
" Nor that he theatre and dome repairs,
" And beautifies her streets and goodly squares;

XLIX.

" Not that he keeps his lordship well defended
" From the winged lions' claws and fierce attacks[32];
" Nor that, when Gallic ravage is extended,
" And the invader all Italia sacks,
" His happy state alone is unoffended[33];
" Unharassed, and ungalled by toll or tax.
" Not for these blessings I recount, and more
" His grateful realm shall Hercules adore;

L.

" So much as that from him shall spring a pair
" Of brothers, leagued no less by love than blood;
" Who shall be all that Leda's children were;
" The just Alphonso, Hippolite the good[34].
" And as each twin resigned the vital air
" His fellow to redeem from Stygian flood,
" So each of these would gladly spend his breath,
" And for his brother brave perpetual death.

LI.

" In these two princes' excellent affection,
" Their happy lieges more assurance feel,
" Than if their noble town, for its protection,
" Were girded twice by Vulcan's works of steel.
" And so Alphonso in his good direction,
" Justice, with knowledge and with love, shall deal,
" Astrea shall appear returned from heaven,
" To this low earth to varying seasons given.

LII.

" Well is it that his wisdom shines as bright
" As his good sire's, nor is his valour less;
" Since here usurping Venice arms for fight,
" And her full troops his scanty numbers press,
" There she (I know not if more justly hight[35]
" Mother or stepmother) brings new distress;
" But, if a mother, scarce to him more mild
" Than Progne or Medea to her child.

LIII.

" This chief, what time soever he shall go
" Forth with his faithful crew, by night or day,
" By water or by land, will shame the foe,
" With memorable rout and disarray;
" And this too late Romagna's sons shall know.
" Led against former friends in bloody fray,
" Who shall bedew the campaign with their blood,
" By Santern, Po, and Zaniolus' flood.

LIV.

" This shall the Spaniard know, to his dismay[36],
" 'Mid the same bounds, whom papal gold shall gain;
" Who shall from him Bastìa win and slay,
" With cruel rage, her hapless Castellain,
" The city taken; but shall dearly pay;
" His crime, the town retrieved, and victor slain:
" Since in the rescued city not a groom
" Is left alive, to bear the news to Rome.

LV.

" 'Tis he, who with his counsel and his lance,
" Shall win the honours of Romagna's plain,
" And open to the chivalry of France
" The victory over Julius, leagued with Spain.
" Paunch-deep in human blood shall steeds advance
" In that fierce strife, and struggle through the slain,
" 'Mid crowded fields, which scarce a grave supply,
" Where Greek, Italian, Frank, and Spaniard die.

LVI.

" Lo! who in priestly vesturé clad, is crowned
" With purple hat, conferred in hallowed dome!
" 'Tis he, the wise, the liberal, the renowned
" Hippolitus, great cardinal of Rome[37];
" Whose actions shall in every region sound,
" Where'er the honoured muse shall find a home:
" To whose glad era, by indulgent heaven,
" As to Augustus is a Maro given[38].

LVII.

" His deeds adorn his race, as from his car
" The glorious sun illumes the subject earth
" More than the silver moon or lesser star;
" So far all others he transcends in worth.
" I see this captain, ill bested for war,
" Go forth afflicted, and return in mirth:
" Backed by few foot, and fewer cavaliers[39],
" He homeward barks, and fifteen gallies steers.

LVIII.

" Two Sigismonds, the first, the second, see;
" To these Alphonso's five good sons succeed;
" Whose glories spread o'er seas and land shall be.
" The first shall wed a maid of France's seed.
" This is the second Hercules; and *he*[40],
" (That you may know their every name and deed),
" Hippolitus; who with the light shall shine,
" Of his wise uncle, gilding all his line.

LIX.

" Francis the third comes next; the other two
" Alphonsos both;—but yet again I say,
" Thy line through all its branches to pursue,
" Fair virgin, would too long protract thy stay;
" And Phœbus, many times, to mortal view,
" Would quench and light again the lamp of day.
" Then, with thy leave, 'tis time the pageant cease,
" And I dismiss the shades and hold my peace."

LX.

So with the lady's leave the volume closed,
Whose precepts to her will the spirits bent.
And they, where Merlin's ancient bones reposed,
From the first cavern disappearing, went.
Then Bradamant her eager lips unclosed,
Since the divine enchantress gave consent;
" And who," she cried, " that pair of sorrowing mien,
" Alphonso and Hippolitus between?

LXI.

" Sighing, those youths advanced amid the show,
" Their brows with shame and sorrow overcast,
" With downward look, and gait subdued and slow:
" I saw the brothers shun them as they passed."
Melissa heard the dame with signs of woe,
And thus, with streaming eyes, exclaim'd at last:
" Ah! luckless youths[41], with vain illusions fed,
" Whither by wicked men's bad counsel led!

LXII.

" O, worthy seed of Hercules the good,
" Let not their guilt beyond thy love prevail;
" Alas! the wretched pair are of thy blood,
" So may prevailing pity turn the scale!"
And in a sad and softer tone pursued,
" I will not further press the painful tale.
" Chew on fair fancy's food: Nor deem unmeet
" I will not with a bitter chase the sweet.

LXIII.

" Soon as to-morrow's sun shall gild the skies
" With his first light, myself the way will show
" To where the wizard knight Rogero sties;
" And built with polished steel the ramparts glow:
" So long as through deep woods thy journey lies
" Till, at the sea arrived, I shall bestow
" Such new instructions for the future way,
" That thou no more shalt need Melissa's stay."

LXIV.

All night the maid reposes in the cave,
And the best part in talk with Merlin spends;
While with persuasive voice the wizard grave
To her Rogero's honest love commends;
Till from the vault goes forth that virgin brave,
As through the sky the rising sun ascends,
By path, long space obscure on either side,
The weïrd woman still her faithful guide.

LXV.

They gain a hidden glen, which heights inclose,
And mountains inaccessible to man:
And they all day toil on, without repose,
Where precipices frowned and torrents ran.
And (what may some diversion interpose)
Sweet subjects of discourse together scan,
In conference, which best might make appear
The rugged road less dismal and severe.

LXVI.

Of these the greater portion served to guide
(Such the wise woman's scope) the warlike dame;
And teach by what device might be untied
Rogero's gyves, if stedfast were her flame.
" If thou wert Mars himself, or Pallas," cried
The sage Melissa; " though with thee there came
" More than King Charles or Agramant command,
" Against the wizard foe thou could'st not stand.

LXVII.

" Besides that it is walled about with steel,
" And inexpugnable his tower, and high;
" Besides that his swift horse is taught to wheel,
" And caracol and gallop in mid sky,
" He bears a mortal shield of power to seal,
" As soon as 'tis exposed, the dazzled eye;
" And so invades each sense the splendour shed,
" That he who sees the blaze remains as dead.

LXVIII.

" And lest to shut thine eyes, thou should'st suppose
" Might serve, contending with the wizard knight;
" How would'st thou know, when both in combat close,
" When he strikes home, or when eschews the fight?
" But to escape the blaze which blinds his foes,
" And render vain each necromantic sleight,
" Have here a speedy mean which cannot miss;
" Nor can the world afford a way but this.

LXIX.

" King Agramant of Africa a ring,
" Thieved from an Indian queen[42] by subtle guiles,
" Has to a baron of his following
" Consigned, who now precedes us by few miles;
" Brunello he. Who wears the gift shall bring
" To nought all sorceries and magic wiles.
" In thefts and cheats Brunello is as well
" Instructed, as the sage in charm and spell.

LXX.

" Brunello, he so practised and so sly
" As now I tell thee, by his king is sent,
" That he with aid of mother wit may try,
" And of this ring, well proved in like event,
" To take Rogero from the castle high;
" So has he boasted, by the wizard pent:
" And to his lord such promise did impart,
" Who has Rogero's presence most at heart.

LXXI.

" That his escape to thee alone may owe,
" Not to the king, the youthful cavalier,
" How to release Rogero from his foe
" And his enchanted cage, prepare to hear.
" Three days along the shingle shalt thou go,
" Beside the sea, whose waves will soon appear;
" Thee the third day shall to a hostel bring,
" Where he shall come who bears the virtuous ring.

LXXII.

" That thou may'st recognise the man, in height
" Less than six palms, observe one at this inn
" Of black and curly hair the dwarfish wight!
" Beard overgrown about the cheek and chin;
" With shaggy brow, swoln eyes, and cloudy sight,
" A nose close flattened, and a sallow skin;
" To this, that I may make my sketch complete,
" Succinctly clad, like courier, goes the cheat.

LXXIII.

" Thy conversation with this man shall turn
" Upon enchantment, spell, and mystic pact;
" And thou shalt, in thy talk, appear to yearn
" To prove the wizard's strength, as is the fact.
" But, lady, let him not thy knowledge learn
" Of his good ring, which mars all magic act:
" He shall propose to bring thee as a guide
" To the tall castle, whither thou would'st ride.

LXXIV.

" Follow him close, and viewing (for a sign),
" Now near, the fortress of the enchanter hoar;
" Let no false pity there thy mind incline
" To stay the execution of my lore.
" Give him his death; but let him not divine
" Thy thought, nor grant him respite; for before
" Thine eyes, concealed by it, the caitiff slips
" If once he place the ring between his lips."

LXXV.

Discoursing thus, they came upon the sea
Where Garonne near fair Bordeaux meets the tide;
Here, fellow travellers no more to be,
Some natural tears they drop and then divide.
Duke Aymon's child, who slumbers not till she
Release her knight, holds on till even-tide:
'Twas then the damsel at a hostel rested,
Where Sir Brunello was already guested.

LXXVI.

The maid Brunello knows as soon as found
(So was his image on her mind impressed),
And asks him whence he came, and whither bound;
And he replies and lies, as he is pressed.
The dame, who is forewarned, and knows her ground,
Feigns too as well as he, and lies her best:
And changes sex and sect, and name and land,
And her quick eye oft glances at his hand;

LXXVII.

Oft glances at his restless hand, in fear
That he might undetected make some prize;
Nor ever lets the knave approach too near,
Well knowing his condition: In this guise
The couple stand together, when they hear
A sudden sound: but what that sound implies
I, sir, shall tell hereafter, with its cause;
But first shall break my song with fitting pause.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1.

This is the ancient memorable cave
Which Merlin, &c.

Stanza x. lines 1 and 2.

The story of Merlin is so familiar to all my readers, that it stands in no need of comment, and it is scarcely necessary to add, that the account given here of his death does not vary from the ancient romancers' relations, except in that Ariosto has changed the scene from Britain, the original seat of all sorcery and chivalry, to France.

2.

The noble blood, &c.

Stanza xvii. line 1.

The beginning of this pedigree is, of course, purely ideal.

3.

A pentacle for more assurance tied.

Stanza xxi. line 6.

A five-sided instrument, as the name imports, constructed with some mystical reference to the five senses, and considered as the best defence against demons in the act of conjuration, &c. It is termed *signum Salamonis* by the cabalists (the Solomon's seal of which we hear so many wonders in Eastern tales), and is still relied upon for its powers by the ignorant in Italy, and, probably, elsewhere: though in England it is only known through books.

4.

He, first of thine and of Rogero's seed.

Stanza xxiv. line 3.

This Rizieri, whom Ariosto calls Ruggiero, died without a son.

5.

By him king Desiderius shall be pressed.

Stanza xxv. line 1.

Pope Adrian called in Pepin to his assistance against Desiderius the last of the Lombard kings, who was expelled from Italy; and it is for supposed services in this warfare that Rogero, who lived before the time of Charlemagne, is rewarded by that sovereign with the fiefs of Calaon and Este.

6.

Hubert, thy grandson, comes behind.

Stanza xxv. line 5.

Uberto, Count of Este and Commacchio.

7.

Alberto next, unconquered captain, see.

Stanza xxvi. line 1.

Alberto defeated the Emperor Berengarius the first, who had taken Milan. Hugh, spoken of as bearing the serpents, afterwards the symbol of the duchy, was the son of Albert, as stated in the text.

8.

And, his good brother dead, the Insubri sway.

Stanza xxvi. line 6.

The district of Lombardy, in which are situated Milan, Como, Pavia, Lodi, Novara, and Vercelli, the ancient possessions of the Insubri.

Azzo the first succeeded to the government of Milan, but was obliged to fly the persecution of Berengarius, and take refuge with Otho the first Duke of Saxony, taking with him his wife, then big with Albertazzo.

9.

Lo! Albertazo! by whose rede undone.
Stanza xxvi. line 7.

Albertazzo is said to have counselled the calling in of Otho, mentioned above, to the attack and discomfiture of the third Berengarius and his son. He married Alda, the daughter of Otho.

10.

And lo! another Hugh! O noble line!
Stanza xxvii. line 3.

Gregory V. having fled from Rome, where he was insulted by the citizens, took refuge with the Emperor Otho, whereupon another pope was elected, who, in his turn, retired from this Hugh (Ugo), Otho's general, into the castle of St. Angelo. Hugh replaced Gregory in the papal chair. I cannot, however, explain how he could be said to take Otho as well as Gregory out of the hands of the Romans, as Otho was besieging the castle of St. Angelo. He may indeed be said to have broken up the siege, by removing the cause of it.

11.

See Fulke, who to his brother will convey
All his Italian birthright and command.
Stanza xxviii. lines 1 and 2.

Hugh and Fulke (Ugo and Fulco) were sons of Albertazzo and Alda, to whose duchy of Saxony, which had devolved to her at the death of her father Otho, Fulke succeeded, making over his possessions in Italy to his brother Hugh. It is from this sucker that the present royal family of England is derived.

12.

Azo the second, he who next repairs!

Stanza xxix. line 2.

"Azzo II. had sons Bertoldo and Albertazzo, who resisted Henry II.; in opposition to whom, Rodolph, Duke of Saxony, was chosen. A pitched battle was fought between the rivals, in which Henry was driven out of Italy. On the side of Rodolph was Bertoldo, who figures in the text for his services on that occasion. The marriage of Matilda to his brother Albertazzo, on which the poet dwells with satisfaction, did not justify in its effects the triumph with which he seems to regard it; as it was dissolved on account of scruples respecting relationship, entertained by Matilda."

Such is the information I extract from the old commentators, who appear, however, to have accommodated facts to Ariosto's statements, which are here, I believe, irreconcilable with real history.

13.

Rinaldo shall succeed him in his power.

Stanza xxx. line 5.

Rinaldo, son of the fourth Marquis of Este, fought against the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, and Octavian, the anti-pope, in favour of Alexander III.

14.

Another Azo rules Verona's town.

Stanza xxxi. line 1.

This Azzo was elected Podestà of Verona.

15.

See Fulke and Obyson, more Azos, Hughs!

Stanza xxxii. line 1.

I have preferred English names, or even French, as approaching nearer to our associations, wherever no ridicule attached to

them. For this reason I have changed *Obizzo** (accented as a dactyl in Italian) into its French equivalent.

16.

Two Guelphs: the first fair Umbria's land subdues.

Stanza xxxii. line 3.

The Lords of Este, siding with the Guelphs, received from the church the duchy of Spoleto.

17.

I speak of the fifth Azo of thy strain.

Stanza xxxii. line 7.

By whom Ezzelino, nick-named the son of the devil, on account of his monstrous cruelties, was defeated, wounded, and taken. But I believe the poet is not justified in killing him by the hand of Azzo, as he is supposed to have committed suicide. Authors are not agreed about the manner in which he effected it.

18.

Shall rule the city, seated by the streams.

Stanza xxxiv. line 2.

Ferrara.—I need hardly add that the Po was the supposed scene of Phaeton's catastrophe, the transformation of his sisters into poplars or larches weeping amber, and of Cygnus into a swan.

19.

But does no laurel for his brother twine,
Aldobrandino? &c.

Stanza xxxv. lines 1 and 2.

Aldobrandino of Este, and first Marquis of Ferrara, obliged Otho IV. to retire into Germany, who had made war on Pope

* Besides this word, meaning, in its ordinary acceptation howitzer, I recollect but one more violation of what may be called the rule of position in Italian. This is in *polixa*: whence our policy of insurance, &c.

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Innocent IV. and driven him into the capital for shelter. Aldobrandino being in want of money to carry on the war, borrowed it of the Florentines, leaving his brother in pledge. His end and succession are also truly related in the text. I should add, that he killed the Count of Celano, to which Ariosto has also alluded.

20.

And all the cities which 'twixt Tronto are,
And green Isauro's stream, from mount to main.
Stanza xxxvii. lines 3 and 4.

This space would, I believe, comprehend the old Exarchate of Ravenna.

21.

In good Rinaldo equal worth shall shine.
Stanza xxxviii. line 1.

Rinaldo, the son of Azzo, who was poisoned at Naples, where he was confined by Frederic II.

22.

Young Obyson, shall fill his grandsire's place.
Stanza xxxviii. last line.

Obizzo, natural son of the last Rinaldo, was legitimated by Pope Innocent III. with the consent of the emperor, and succeeded to the inheritance of Ferrara. He conquered Modena and Reggio.

23.

Sixth of the name, his Azo rears upright.
Stanza xxxix. line 5.

In a partial crusade, in the time of Charles II. king of the two Sicilies, Azzo was made standard-bearer, and, for his services, obtained the daughter of that king in matrimony.

24.

Aldobrandino, Nicholas the lame.

Stanza xl. line 4.

Niccolo d'Este, and Alberto his brother, obtained Faenza, and were successful in their enterprises.

25.

And that fair town, whose produce is the rose.

Stanza xli. line 1.

Rovigo, called in Latin Rhodigium, translated from the Greek ῥοδιγιον.

26.

That, too, which fishy marshes round enclose.

Stanza xlj. line 3.

Commacchio, a town in the Ferrarese, situated between two branches of the Po; whose inhabitants are said to rejoice in storms, because they drive the fish into their marshes, called in the Venetian dialect (of which the Ferrarese seems only a modification) *vali*, or valleys.

27.

See Nicholas, whom in his tender age.

Stanza xlii. line 1.

Nicholas being left an infant by his father Alberto's death, Azzo of Este, who had been driven from his country, thought of returning, with the assistance of Tydeus, Count of Conio; but was opposed by the child's guardians, who made Nicholas Lord of Ferrara. He afterwards killed Otho III. who had usurped Parma and Reggio—and obtained the grant of those cities by the consent of the inhabitants.

28.

And still the fair dominion shall increase.

Stanza xliv. line 1.

Meaning that of the house of Este.

29.

Lo! Lionel! lo! Borso great and kind!

Stanza xlv. line 1.

Lionel and Borso were the natural sons, and Hercules and Sigismond the legitimate sons of Nicholas; who left his legitimate children under the protection of Lionel, who, seizing the government, drove out the brothers, and reigned in their place. His brother Borso, after the death of Lionel, recalled the banished brothers, and educated them as his own children.

30.

Lo! Hercules, who might reproach his neighbour,
With foot half burnt, &c.

Stanza xlvi. lines 1 and 2.

Hercules succeeded Borso. He would seem to have been wounded in a battle at Budrìo, where he was an ally of the Venetians against the Romans, and restored the fortune of the day, but I do not know what authority Ariosto had for this.

Budrìo is a town in the territory of Ravenna. Barco is a place under the walls of Ferrara.

31.

Where he shall strive in duel, hand to hand,
And gain the praise of Catalonia's king.

Stanza xlvii. lines 3 and 4.

Hercules fought in the service of Alphonso, king of the Catalans, when he, I suppose, fought the single combat alluded to in the text.

32.

From the winged lions' claws and fierce attacks.

Stanza xlix. line 2.

The ensign of Venice.

33.

His happy state alone is unoffended;
Unharassed, and ungalled by toll or tax.
Stanza xlix. lines 5 and 6.

His states escaped the oppression of Charles VIII. of France, when he overran the greater part of Italy.

34.

The just Alphonso, Hippolite the good.
Stanza l. line 4.

Alphonso I. the third Duke of Ferrara, and Cardinal Ippolito his brother, both patrons of Ariosto.

35.

There she (I know not if more justly hight
Mother or stepmother), &c.
Stanza lii. lines 5 and 6.

Meaning Rome.

36.

This shall the Spaniard know, to his dismay.
Stanza liv. line 1.

Alphonso being at variance with the pope and the Venetians, the pope obtained from Ferdinand, King of Naples, some Spanish troops, who took Bastia, which was retaken under the circumstances stated in the text.

37.

Hippolitus, great cardinal of Rome.
Stanza lvi. line 4.

The Ippolito to whom he dedicates his poem.

38.

As to Augustus is a Maro given.

Stanza lvi. last line.

The Maro (*Marone*), celebrated in the same stanza, in whom Ariosto might seem to have prefigured himself, is averred by a commentator to have been Andrea Marone, a Ferrarese poet of that day, and the conjecture appears strengthened by the honourable mention made of him in the last canto of the Furioso.

39.

Backed by few foot, and fewer cavaliers,
He homeward barks, and fifteen galleys steers.

Stanza lvii. lines 7 and 8.

Barks and galleys taken by horse and foot sound oddly in an Englishman's ears. The passage alludes to the following exploit. The Venetians going up the Po with a fleet against Alphonso, Cardinal Ippolito went out of the city with some horse and foot, and coming to Volona, a castle near the river; and finding the enemy's galleys unprovided, most of the crews being on shore, he sank four of them, and took fifteen, with other smaller craft.

40.

This is the second Hercules.

Stanza lviii. line 5.

Hercules the second, fourth Duke of Ferrara.

41.

Ah! luckless youths, with vain illusions fed.

Stanza lxi. line 7.

Ferrante of Este, natural brother to Alfonso and Ippolito, had conspired with Giulio, his natural brother, to assassinate the duke; but the plot being discovered, they were condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

Sir John Harrington tells the following story respecting the origin of this plot. "It happened that Ippolito, and one of these brothers, fell in love with a courtesan, who, showing less affection to Ippolito, was one day very earnestly importuned by him to know what moved her to prefer his brother before him; she answered, it was his beautiful eyes; upon which Ippolito ordered them to be thrust out; but the youth found means to preserve his sight, and, meeting with no redress, by making his complaint to the duke, he, and the other brother here mentioned, conspired to kill him; but, at the time of the execution, their hearts failed them, and the plot being discovered they were kept in perpetual imprisonment."

42.

Thieved from an Indian queen by subtle guiles.

Stanza lxix. line 2..

Angelica, daughter of Galaphron of Cathay. For this and the other thefts of Brunello, see the *Innamorato*.

I am afraid the reader will have found this bad imitation of Virgil's 6th book of the Æneid, and genealogy in verse and prose, as tedious to read as I have to write. If he is, however, nauseated with the flattery addressed to the house which it was intended to glorify, he should recollect that there are circumstances which may mitigate the feeling excited by seeing fine talents so unworthily employed.

It may, in the first place, be observed, that Ariosto's sin was the vice of his century; and, in the second, that he proceeded in the line marked out for him by Boiardo, not merely in what relates to his story, but, generally speaking, also in his mode of conducting it, style of episodes, &c. &c. &c. Now, in Boiardo, he found a precedent for the third canto, which I

have attempted to illustrate in these notes. Not to follow his guide then, in this place, when he had followed him every where else, would have been little short of an insult to his patron; the more so, as the honest old Lord of Scandiano had no apparent motive for ministering to the vanity of the house of Este.

Though Ariosto is usually happy in his copies of the ancient poets, he seems here to have been oppressed by his subject, and the vision of the brother's, suggested by that of Marcellus, with the

"luctum ne quære tuorum,"

imitated in the LXII stanza, seem the only circumstances, in his original, which he has turned to account.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.

The old Atlantes suffers fatal wreck,
Foiled by the ring, and young Rogero freed,
Who soars in air till he appears a speck,
Mounted upon the wizard's winged steed.
Obedient to the royal Charles's beck,
He who had followed Love's imperious lead,
Rinaldo, disembarks on British land,
And saves Genevra, doomed to stake and brand.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO IV.

I.

THOUGH an ill mind appear in simulation[1],
And, for the most, such quality offends;
'Tis plain that this in many a situation
Is found to further beneficial ends,
And save from blame, and danger, and vexation;
Since we converse not always with our friends,
In this, less clear than clouded, mortal life,
Beset with snares, and full of envious strife.

II.

If after painful proof we scarcely find
A real friend, through various chances sought,
To whom we may communicate our mind,
Keeping no watch upon our wandering thought;
What should the young Rogero's lady kind
Do with Brunello, not sincere, but fraught
With treasons manifold, and false and tainted,
As by the good enchantress truly painted?

III.

She feigns as well with that deceitful scout;
(Fitting with him the father of all lies)
Watches his thievish hands in fear and doubt;
And follows every motion with her eyes.
When lo! a mighty noise is heard without!
"O mighty mother! king of heaven!" she cries,
"What thing is this I hear?" and quickly springs
Towards the place from whence the larum rings,

IV.

And sees the host and all his family;
Where, one to door, and one to window slips,
With eyes upturned and gazing at the sky,
As if to witness comet or eclipse.
And there the lady views, with wondering eye,
What she had scarce believed from other's lips,
A feathered courser, sailing through the rack,
Who bore an armed knight upon his back.

V.

Broad were his pinions, and of various hue[2];
Seated between, a knight the saddle pressed,
Clad in steel arms, which wide their radiance threw,
His wonderous course directed to the west:
There dropt among the mountains lost to view.
And this was, as that host informed his guest,
(And true the tale) a sorcerer, who made
Now farther, now more near, his frequent raid.

VI.

" He, sometimes towering, soars into the skies;
" Then seems, descending, but to skim the ground:
" And of all beauteous women makes a prize,
" Who, to their mischief, in these parts are found.
" Hence, whether in their own or others' eyes,
" Esteemed as fair, the wretched damsels round,
" (And all in fact the felon plunders) hide;
" As fearing of the sun to be descried.

VII.

" A castle on the Pyrenean height
" The necromancer keeps, the work of spell,"
(The host relates) " of steel, so fair and bright,
" All nature cannot match the wonderous shell.
" There many cavaliers, to prove their might,
" Have gone, but none returned the tale to tell.
" So that I doubt, fair sir, the thief enthralls
" Or slays whoever in the encounter falls."

VIII.

The watchful maid attends to every thing,
Glad at her heart, and trusting to complete
(What she shall compass by the virtuous ring)
The downfall of the enchanter and his seat.
Then to the host—" A guide I pray thee bring,
" Who better knows than me the thief's retreat.
" So burns my heart, (nor can I choose but go)
" To strive in battle with this wizard foe."

IX.

" It shall not need," exclaimed the dwarfish Moor,
" For I, myself, will serve you as a guide;
" Who have the road set down, with other lore,
" So that you shall rejoice with me to ride."
He meant the ring, but further hint forbore;
Lest dearly he the avowal should abide.
And she to him—" Your guidance gives me pleasure."
Meaning by this she hoped to win his treasure.

X.

What useful was to say, she said, and what
Might hurt her with the Saracen, concealed.
Well suited to her ends, the host had got
A palfrey, fitting for the road or field.
She bought the steed, and as Aurora shot
Her rosy rays, rode forth with spear and shield:
And maid and courier through a valley wind,
Brunello now before and now behind.

XI.

From wood to wood, from mount to mountain hoar,
They clomb a summit, which in cloudless sky
Discovers France and Spain, and either shore.
As from a peak of Apennine the eye
May Tuscan and Sclavonian sea explore,
There, whence we journey to Camaldoli.
Then through a rugged path and painful wended,
Which thence into a lowly vale descended.

XII.

A rock from that deep valley's centre springs;
Bright walls of steel about its summit go:
And this as high that airy summit flings,
As it leaves all the neighbouring cliffs below.
He may not scale the height who has not wings;
And vainly would each painful toil bestow.
"Lo! where his prisoners!" Sir Brunello cries,
"Ladies and cavaliers, the enchanter sties."

XIII.

Scarped smooth upon four parts, the mountain bare
Seemed fashioned with the plumb, by builder's skill;
Nor upon any side was path or stair,
Which furnished man the means to climb the hill.
The castle seemed the very nest and lair
Of animal, supplied with plume and quill.
And here the damsel knows 'tis time to slay
The wily dwarf, and take the ring away.

XIV.

But deems it foul, with blood of man to stain
Unarmed and of so base a sort, her brand;
For well, without his death, she may obtain
The costly ring; and so suspends her hand.
Brunello, off his guard, with little pain,
She seized, and strongly bound with girding band:
Then to a lofty fir made fast the string;
But from his finger first withdrew the ring.

XV.

Neither by tears, nor groans, nor sound of woe,
To move the stedfast maid the dwarf had power:
She down the rugged hill descended slow,
Until she reached the plain beneath the tower.
Then gave her bugle breath, the keep below,
To call the castled wizard to the stower:
And when the sound was finished, threatening cried,
And called him to the combat and defied.

XVI.

Not long within his gate the enchanter stayed,
After he heard the voice and bugle ring.
Against the foe, who seemed a man, arrayed
In arms, with him the horse is on the wing.
But his appearance well consoled the maid,
Who, with small cause for fear, beheld him bring
Nor mace, nor rested lance, nor biting sword,
Wherewith the corselet might be bruised or gored.

XVII.

On his left arm alone his shield he took,
Covered all o'er with silk of crimson hue;
In his right-hand he held an open book,
Whence, as the enchanter read, strange wonder grew:
For often times, to sight, the lance he shook;
And flinching eyelids could not bide the view;
With tuck or mace he seemed to smite the foe:
But sate aloof and had not struck a blow.

XVIII.

No empty fiction wrought by magic lore,
But natural was the steed the wizard pressed;
For him a filly to a griffin bore;
Hight hippogryph. In wings and beak and crest,
Formed like his sire, as in the feet before;
But like the mare, his dam, in all the rest.
Such on Riphæan hills, though rarely found,
Are bred, beyond the frozen ocean's bound.

XIX.

Drawn by enchantment from his distant lair,
The wizard thought but how to tame the foal;
And, in a month, instructed him to bear
Saddle and bit, and gallop to the goal;
And execute on earth or in mid air,
All shifts of manege, course and caracole:
He with such labour wrought. This only real,
Where all the rest was hollow and ideal.

XX.

This truth by him with fictions was combined,
Whose sleight passed red for yellow, black for white:
But all his vain enchantments could not blind
The maid, whose virtuous ring assured her sight:
Yet she her blows discharges at the wind;
And spurring here and there prolongs the fight.
So drove or wheeled her steed, and smote at nought,
And practised all she had before been taught.

XXI.

When she sometime had fought upon her horse,
She from the courser on her feet descends:
To compass and more freely put in force,
As by the enchantress schooled, her wily ends.
The wizard, to display his last resource,
Unweeting the defence, towards her wends.
He bares the shield, secure to blind his foe,
And by the magic light, astonished, throw.

XXII.

The shield might have been shown at first, nor he
Needed to keep the cavaliers at bay;
But that he loved some master-stroke to see,
Achieved by lance or sword in single fray.
As with the captive mouse, in sportive glee,
The wily cat is sometimes seen to play;
Till waxing wroth, or weary of her prize,
She bites, and at a snap the prisoner dies.

XXIII.

To cat and mouse, in battles fought before,
I liken the magician and his foes;
But the comparison holds good no more:
For, with the ring, the maid against him goes;
Firm and attentive still, and watching sore,
Lest upon her the wizard should impose:
And as she sees him bare the wondrous shield,
Closes her eyes and falls upon the field.

XXIV.

Not that the shining metal could offend,
As wont those others, from its cover freed;
But so the damsel did, to make descend
The vain enchanter from his wonderous steed.
Nor was in ought defeated of her end;
For she no sooner on the grassy mead
Had laid her head, than wheeling widely round,
The flying courser pitched upon the ground.

XXV.

Already cased again, the shield was hung,
By the magician, at his saddle bow.
He lights and seeks her, who like wolf among
The bushes, couched in thicket, waits the roe;
She without more delay from ambush sprung,
As he drew near, and grappled fast the foe.
That wretched man, the volume by whose aid
He all his battles fought, on earth had laid:

XXVI.

And ran to bind her with a chain, which he,
Girt round about him for such purpose, wore;
Because he deemed she was no less to be
Mastered and bound than those subdued before.
Him hath the dame already flung; by me
Excused with reason, if he strove not more.
For fearful were the odds between that bold
And puissant maid, and warrior weak and old!

XXVII.

Intending to behead the fallen foe,
She lifts her conquering hand; but in mid space,
When she beholds his visage, stops the blow,
As if disdaining a revenge so base.
She sees in him, her prowess has laid low,
A venerable sire, with sorrowing face;
Whose hair and wrinkles speak him, to her guess,
Of years six score and ten, or little less.

XXVIII.

"Kill me, for love of God!" (afflicted sore,
The old enchanter full of wrath did cry)
But the victorious damsel was not more
Averse to kill, than he was bent to die.
To know who was the necromancer hoar
The gentle lady had desire, and why
The tower he in that savage place designed,
Doing such outrage foul to all mankind.

XXIX.

"Nor I, by malice moved, alas! poor wight,"
(The weeping necromancer answer made,)
"Built the fair castle on the rocky height,
"Nor yet for rapine ply the robber's trade;
"But only to redeem a gentle knight
"From danger sore and death, by love was swayed;
"Who, as the skies foreshow, in little season,
"Is doomed to die a christian, and by treason.

XXX.

" The sun beholds not 'twixt the poles, a Child
" So excellent as him, and passing fair;
" Who from his infancy, Rogero styled,
" (Atlantes I) was tutored by my care.
" By love of fame and evil stars beguiled,
" He follows into France Troyano's heir*.
" Him, in my eyes, than son esteemed more dear,
" I seek to snatch from France and peril near.

XXXI.

" I only built the beauteous keep to be
" Rogero's dungeon, safely harboured there;
" Who whilom was subdued in fight by me,
" As I to-day had hoped thyself to snare,
" And dames and knights, and more of high degree,
" Have to this tower conveyed, his lot to share,
" That with such partners of his prison pent,
" He might the loss of freedom less lament.

XXXII.

" Save they should seek to break their dungeon's bound,
" I grant my inmates every other pleasure.
" For whatsoever in the world is found,
" Search its four quarters, in this keep I treasure;
" (Whatever heart can wish or tongue can sound)
" Cates, brave attire, game, sport, or mirthful measure.
" My field well sown, I well had reaped my grain,
" But that thy coming makes my labour vain.

* Agramant.

XXXIII.

" Ah! then unless thy heart less beauteous be
" Than thy sweet face, mar not my pious care;
" Take my steel buckler, this I give to thee,
" And take that horse, which flies so fast in air,
" Nor meddle with my castle more; or free
" One or two captive friends, the rest forbear—
" Or (for I crave but this) release them all,
" So that Rogero but remain my thrall.

XXXIV.

" Or if disposed to take him from my sight,
" Before the youth be into France conveyed,
" Be pleased to free my miserable sprite
" From its now rotted bark, long since decayed."
" Prate as thou wilt, I shall restore the knight
" To liberty," replied the martial maid,
" Nor offer shield and courser to resign,
" Which are not in thy gift,—already mine.

XXXV.

" Nor were they thine to take or to bestow,
" Would it appear that such exchange were wise;
" Thou sayest to save him from what stars foreshow,
" And cheat an evil influence of the skies
" Rogero is confined. Thou canst not know,
" Or knowing, canst not change his destinies:
" For, if unknown an ill so near to thee,
" Far less mayest thou another's fate foresee.

XXXVI.

" Seek not thy death from me; for the petition
" Is made in vain; but if for death thou sigh,
" Though the whole world refused the requisition,
" A soul resolved would find the means to die.
" But ope thy gates to give thy guests dismission
" Before thine hand the knot of life untie."
So spake the scornful dame with angry mock,
Speeding her captive still towards the rock.

XXXVII.

Bound by the conqueror with the chain he bore,
Atlantes walked, the damsel following nigh,
Who trusted not to the magician hoar,
Although he seemed subdued in port and eye.
Nor many paces went the pair, before
They at the mountain's foot the cleft espy,
With steps by which the rugged hill to round;
And climb, till to the castle-gate they wound:

XXXVIII.

Atlantes from the threshold, graved by skill,
With characters and wondrous signs, upturned
A virtuous stone, where, underneath the sill,
Pots, with perpetual fire and secret, burned.
The enchanter breaks them; and at once the hill
To an inhospitable rock is turned.
Nor wall nor tower on any side is seen,
As if no castle there had ever been.

XXXIX.

Then from the lady's toils the wizard clears[4]
His limbs, as thrush escapes the fowler's snare;
With him as well his castle disappears,
And leaves the prisoned troop in open air;
From their gay lodgings, dames and cavaliers,
Unhoused upon that desert, bleak and bare.
And many at the freedom felt annoy,
Which dispossessed them of such life of joy.

XL.

There is Gradasso, there is Sacripant[5],
There is Prasildo, noble cavalier,
Who with Rinaldo came from the Levant;
Iroldo, too, Prasildo's friend sincere.
And there, at last, the lovely Bradamant
Discerns Rogero, long desired and dear;
Who, when assured it was that lady, flew
With joyful cheer to greet the damsel true;

XLI.

As her he prized before his eyes, his heart,
His life; from that day cherished when she stood
Uncasqued for him, and from the fight apart;
And hence an arrow drank her virgin blood.
'Twere long to tell who launched the cruel dart,
And how the lovers wandered in the wood;
Now guided by the sun, and now benighted,
Here first since that encounter reunited,

XLII.

Now that the stripling sees her here, and knows
Alone she freed him from the wizard's nest,
He deems, his bosom with such joy overflows,
That he is singly fortunate and blest.
Thither, where late the damsel conquered, goes
The band, descending from the mountain's crest;
And finds the hippogryph, who bore the shield,
But in its case of crimson silk concealed.

XLIII.

To take him by the rein the lady there
Approached, and he stood fast till she was nigh,
Then spread his pinions to the liquid air,
And at short distance lit, half-mountain high:
And, as she follows him with fruitless care,
Nor longer flight nor shorter will he try.
'Tis thus the raven, on some sandy beach,
Lures on the dog, and flits beyond his reach.

XLIV.

Gradasso, Sacripant, Rogero, who
With all those other knights below were met,
Where'er, they hope he may return, pursue
The beast, and up and down, each pass beset.
He having led those others, as he flew,
Often to rocky height, and bottom wet,
Among the rocks of the moist valley dropt,
And at short distance from Rogero stopt.

XLV.

This was Atlantes the enchanter's deed,
Whose pious wishes still directed were,
To see Rogero from his peril freed:
This was his only thought, his only care;
Who for such end dispatched the winged steed,
Him out of Europe by this sleight to bear.
Rogero took his bridle, but in vain;
For he was restive to the guiding rein.

XLVI.

Now the bold youth from his Frontino flings
(Frontino was his gentle courser hight)
Then leaps on him who towers in air, and stings
And goads his haughty heart with rowels bright.
He runs a short career; then upward springs,
And through mid ether soars a fairer flight
Than hawk, from which the falconer plucks away
In time the blinding hood, and points her prey.

XLVII.

When her Rogero the fair dame discerned,
In fearful peril, soar so high a strain,
She stood long space amazed, ere she returned
To her right judgement, and sound wits again:
And what she erst of Ganymede had learned,
Snatched up to heaven from his paternal reign,
Feared might befall the stripling, born through air,
As gentle as young Ganymede and fair.

XLVIII.

She on Rogero looks with stedfast eyes
As long as feeble sight can serve her use;
And in her mind next tracks him through the skies,
When sight in vain the cherished youth pursues.
And still renewing tears, and groans, and sighs,
Will not afford her sorrow peace or truce.
After the knight had vanished from her view,
Her eyes she on the good Frontino threw.

XLIX.

And lest the courser should become the prey
Of the first traveller, who passed the glen,
Him will not leave; but thence to bear away
Resolves, in trust to see his lord again.
The griffin soars, nor can Rogero stay
The flying courser; while, beneath his ken,
Each peak and promontory sinks in guise,
That he discerns not flat from mountain-rise.

L.

After the hippogryph has won such height,
That he is lessened to a point, he bends
His course for where the sun, with sinking light,
When he goes round the heavenly crab, descends;
And shoots through air, like well-greased bark and light,
Which through the sea a wind propitious sends.
Him leave we on his way, who well shall speed,
And turn we to Rinaldo in his need.

LI.

Day after day the good Rinaldo fares,
Forced by the wind, the spacious ocean through;
Now westward borne, and now towards the BEARS;
For night and day the ceaseless tempest blew.
Scotland at last her dusky coast uprears,
And gives the Caledonian wood to view;
Which, through its shadowy groves of ancient oak,
Oft echoes to the champion's sturdy stroke.

LII.

Through this roves many a famous cavalier,
Renowned for feat in arms, of British strain;
And throng from distant land, or country near,
French, Norse, or German knights, a numerous train.
Let none, save he be valiant, venture here,
Where, seeking glory, death may be his gain.
Here Arthur, Galahalt and Gauvaine fought[6],
And well Sir Launcelot and Tristram wrought.

LIII.

And other worthies of the table round;
(Of either table, whether old or new),[7]
Whose trophies yet remain upon the ground;
Proof of their valiant feats. Rinaldo true
Forthwith his armour and Bayardo found,
And landed on the woody coast: The crew
He bade, with all the haste they might, repair
To Berwick's neighbouring port, and wait him there.

LIV.

Without a guide or company he went
Through that wide forest; choosing now this way,
Now that, now other, as it might present
Hope of adventurous quest or hard assay:
And, ere the first day's circling sun is spent,
The peer is guested in an abbey gray;
Which spends much wealth in harbouring those who claim
Its shelter, warlike knight or wandering dame.

LV.

The monks and abbot to Mount Alban's peer
A goodly welcome in their house accord;
Who asked, but not before with savoury cheer
He amply had his wearied strength restored,
If in that tract, by errant cavalier,
Often adventurous quest might be explored,
In which a man might prove, by dangerous deed,
If blame or glory were his fitting meed.

LVI.

They answered, in those woods he might be sure
Many and strange adventures would be found;
But deeds, there wrought, were, like the place, obscure,
And, for the greater part, not bruited round.
" Then seek (they said) a worthier quest, secure
" Your works will not be buried under ground.
" So that the glorious act achieved, as due,
" Fame may your peril and your pain pursue.

LVII.

" And if you would your warlike worth assay,
" Prepare the worthiest enterprize to hear,
" That, e'er in times of old or present day,
" Was undertaken by a cavalier.
" Our monarch's daughter needs some friendly stay,
" Now sore bested, against a puissant peer:
" Lurcanio is the doughty baron's name,
" Who would bereave her both of life and fame.

LVIII.

" Her he before her father does pursue,
" Perchance yet more for hatred than for right;
" And vouches, to a gallery she updrew
" A lover, seen by him, at dead of night.
" Hence death by fire will be the damsel's due,
" Such is our law, unless some champion fight
" On her behalf, and, ere a month go by,
" (Nigh spent) upon the accuser prove the lie.

LIX.

" Our impious Scottish law, severe and dread,
" Wills, that a woman, whether low or high
" Her state, who takes a man into her bed,
" Except her husband, for the offence shall die.
" Nor is there hope of ransom for her head,
" Unless to her defence some warrior hie;
" And as her champion true, with spear and shield,
" Maintain her guiltless in the listed field.

LX.

" The king, sore grieving for Geneura bright,
" For such is his unhappy daughter's name,
" Proclaims by town and city, that the knight
" Who shall deliver her from death and shame,
" He to the royal damsel will unite,
" With dower, well suited to a royal dame;
" So that the valiant warrior who has stood
" In her defence, be come of gentle blood.

LXI.

" But if within a month no knight appear,
" Or coming, conquer not, the damsel dies.
" A like emprize were worthier of your spear
" Than wandering through these woods in lowly guise.
" Besides, the eternal trophy you shall rear,
" You by the deed shall gain a glorious prize,
" The sweetest flower of all the ladies fair[8]
" That betwixt Ind and Atlas' pillars are.

LXII.

" And you with wealth and state shall guerdoned be,
" So that you evermore may live content,
" And the king's grace, if through your means he see
" His honour raised anew, now well-nigh spent.
" Besides, you by the laws of chivalry
" Are bound to venge the damsel foully shent.
" For she, whose life is by such treason sought,
" Is chaste and spotless in the common thought."

LXIII.

Rinaldo mused awhile, and then replied,
" And must a gentle damsel die by fire,
" Because she with a lover's wish complied,
" And quenched within her arms his fond desire?
" Cursed be the law by which the dame is tried!
" Cursed he who would permit a doom so dire!
" Perish (such fate were just!) who cruel proves!
" Not she that life bestows on him who loves.

LXIV.

" Or true or false Geneura's tale of shame;
" If she her lover blessed I little heed:
" For this my praise the lady well might claim,
" If manifest were not that gentle deed.
" My every thought is turned to aid the dame.
" Grant me but one to guide my steps, and lead
" Quickly to where the foul accuser stands,
" I trust in God to loose Geneura's bands.

LXV.

" I will not vouch her guiltless in my thought,
" In fear to warrant what is false; but I
" Boldly maintain, in such an act is nought
" For which the damsel should deserve to die;
" And ween unjust, or else of wit distraught,
" Who statutes framed of such severity;
" Which, as iniquitous, should be effaced,
" And with a new and better code replaced.

LXVI.

" If like desire, and if an equal flame
" Move one and the other sex, who warmly press
" To that soft end of love (their goal the same)
" Which to the witless crowd seems rank excess;
" Say why shall woman—merit scathe or blame,
" Though lovers, one or more, she may caress;
" While man to sin with whom he will is free,
" And meets with praise, not mere impunity?

LXVII.

" By this injurious law, unequal still,
" On woman is inflicted open wrong;
" And to demonstrate it a grievous ill,
" I trust in God, which has been born too long."
To good Rinaldo's sentence, with one will,
Deeming their sires unjust, assents the throng,
Their sires who such outrageous statute penned,
And king, who might, but does not, this amend.

LXVIII.

When the new dawn, with streaks of red and white,
Broke in the east, and cleared the hemisphere,
Rinaldo took his steed and armour bright:
A squire that abbey furnished to the peer.
With him, for many leagues and miles, the knight
Pricked through the dismal forest dark and drear;
While they towards the Scottish city ride,
Where the poor damsel's cause is to be tried.

LXIX.

Seeking their way to shorten as they wound,
They to the wider track a path preferred;
When echoing through the gloomy forest round,
Loud lamentations nigh the road were heard.
Towards a neighbouring vale, whence came the sound,
This his Bayardo, that his hackney spurred;
And viewed, between two grisly ruffians there,
A girl, who seemed at distance passing fair.

LXX.

But woe-begone and weeping was the maid
As ever damsel, dame, or wight was seen;
Hard by the barbarous twain prepared the blade,
To deluge with that damsel's blood the green.
She to delay her death awhile essayed,
Until she pity moved with mournful mien.
This when Rinaldo near approaching eyes,
He thither drives with threats and furious cries.

LXXI.

The ruffians turn their backs and take to flight
As soon as they the distant succour view,
And squat within a valley out of sight:
Nor cares the good Rinaldo to pursue.
To her approaching, sues Mount Alban's knight,
To say what on her head such evil drew;
And, to save time, commands his squire to stoop,
And take the damsel on his horse's croup.

LXXII.

And as the lady nearer he surveyed,
Her wise behaviour marked and beauty's bloom;
Though her fair countenance was all dismayed,
And by the fear of death o'erspread with gloom.
Again to know, the gentle knight essayed,
Who had prepared for her so fell a doom;
And she began to tell in humble tone
What to another canto I postpone.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1.

Though an ill mind appear in simulation.

Stanza i. line 1.

If any one should censure as pedantic my translation of *il simulare*, by its only exact English equivalent, which in the general wreck of precision of expression is now falling into disuse, and reject, as not of English authority, the rule laid down in

Quod non est simulo dissimuloque quod est,

I must refer him to Lord Bacon's Essay on SIMULATION and DISSIMULATION.

2.

Broad were his pinions, and of various hue.

Stanza v. line 1.

The winged horse, and indeed every thing in the Furioso, even to the adventures, has been maintained to be allegorical. An Italian commentator, nearest to the time of Ariosto, pronounces this beast to be a type of LOVE, reasoning from his wings, his power of transporting man or woman, &c. &c. &c. The whimsical and precise details of his parentage and education in an after-passage (see stanzas XVIII and XIX) will probably interest the reader more than these conjectures. The circumstantiality of the fiction may here seem to illustrate what I have said, in my preface, respecting points of resemblance between Ariosto and Defoe. Thus, when Robinson Crusoe lands on his island from an expedition in the raft, he sees, sitting

on his arm-chest, "a creature like a cat, yet it was not a cat either," &c.

3.

As from a peak of Apennine the eye
May Tuscan and Sclavonian sea explore,
There, whence we journey to Camaldoli.

Stanza xi. lines 4, 5, 6.

Ariosto is in general so correct in his localities, that I suppose he is right in this assertion, though I was unable to verify it in a mountain-tour which I once made in Tuscany in company with an English and an Italian acquaintance, who, as well as myself, notwithstanding their being gifted with better eyes than me, were unable to discern the double sea we were taught to expect. I should add, that the atmosphere appeared sufficiently clear for the purpose.

4.

Then from the lady's toils the wizard clears
His limbs, as thrush escapes the fowler's snare;
With him as well his castle disappears.

Stanza xxxix. lines 1, 2, 3.

The reader may be tempted to ask why he did not escape before; a thing which seemed as much in his power at one time as at another; but we must not be too jealous about consistencies where magic is concerned. A more extraordinary oversight appears to be the disappearance of the castle, together with the enchanter, which was described as having vanished in the preceding stanza.

5.

There is Gradasso, there is Sacripant,
There is Prasildo, noble cavalier,
Who with Rinaldo came from the Levant;
Iroldo too, Prasildo's friend sincere.

Stanza xl. lines 1, 2, 3, 4.

These are all characters in the *Innamorato;* in which Iroldo and Prasildo are particularly distinguished by their friendship.

6.

Here Arthur, Galahalt and Gauvaine fought,
And well Sir Launcelot and Tristram wrought.
Stanza lii. lines 7 and 8.

King Arthur is known to every one as the founder of the round table. Galahalt was a son of Sir Launcelot, who was enamoured of Arthur's wife, Ganor, or Gineura; but whose constancy to her was surprised by a princess, who, in consequence, gave birth to Galahalt. This knight achieved the quest of the *sangreal*, or real blood of Christ, as is related in the latter part of the *Mort Arthur*, where that fine old compilation of romances becomes mystical. Sir Gauvaine was more especially distinguished for his courtesy, and Sir Tristram for the same propensity as Sir Launcelot, he being as faithfully attached to Yseult, the wife of King Mark of Cornwall, as Launcelot was to the wife of Arthur, King of Britain.

7.

Of either table, whether old or new.
Stanza liii. line 2.

In imitation of Arthur, the romancers atttributed also a *round table* to Charlemagne.

8.

The sweetest flower of all the ladies fair
That betwixt Ind and Atlas' pillars are.
Stanza lxi. lines 7 and 8.

Ariosto mentions these as the eastern and western extremities of the world, without much consideration of the position of the speaker, or of hers to whom he referred. This sort of phrase seems to have originated during an imperfect state of geography, and to have been continued (as often happens in similar cases) after the motive for it had ceased. The lines seem to be a free translation of Juvenal's

——— a Gadibus usque
Auroram et Gangem.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.

Lurcanio, by a false report abused,
Deemed by Geneura's fault his brother dead,
Weening the faithless duke, whom she refused,
Was taken by the damsel to her bed;
And her before the king and peers accused:
But to the session Ariodantes led,
Strives with his brother in disguise. In season
Rinaldo comes to venge the secret treason.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO V.

I.

Among all other animals who prey[1]
On earth, or who unite in friendly wise,
Whether they mix in peace or moody fray,
No male offends his mate. In safety lies
The she-bear, matched with hers, through forest gray:
The lioness beside the lion lies:
Wolves, male and female, live in loving cheer;
Nor gentle heifer dreads the wilful steer.

II.

What Fury, what abominable Pest
Such poison in the human heart has shed,
That still 'twixt man and wife, with rage possessed,
Injurious words and foul reproach are said?
And blows and outrage base their peace molest[2],
And bitter tears still wash the genial bed;
Not only watered by the tearful flood,
But often bathed by senseless ire with blood?

III.

Not simply a rank sinner, he appears
To outrage nature, and his God to dare,
Who his foul hand against a woman rears[3],
Or of her head would harm a single hair.
But who what drug the burning entrails sears,
Or who for her would knife or noose prepare,
No man appears to me, though such to sight
He seem, but rather some infernal sprite.

IV.

Such, and no other were those ruffians two,
Whom good Rinaldo from the damsel scared,
Conducted to these valleys out of view,
That none might wot of her so foully snared.
I ended where the damsel, fair of hue,
To tell the occasion of her scathe prepared,
To the good Paladin, who brought release;
And in conclusion thus my story piece.

V.

" Of direr deed than ever yet was done[4],"
The gentle dame began, " Sir cavalier,
" In Thebes, Mycene, Argos, or upon
" Other more savage soil, prepare to hear;
" And I believe, that if the circling sun
" To these our Scottish shores approach less near
" Than other land, 'tis that he would eschew
" A foul ferocious race that shocks his view.

VI.

" All times have shown that man has still pursued
" With hate, in every clime, his natural foe;
" But to deal death to those who seek our good
" Does from too ill and foul a nature flow.
" Now, that the truth be better understood,
" I shall from first to last the occasion show,
" Why in my tender years, against all right,
" Those caitiffs would have done me foul despite.

VII.

" 'Tis fitting you should know, that in the spring
" Of life, I to the palace made resort;
" There served long time the daughter of the king,
" And grew with her in growth, well placed in court.
" When cruel love, my fortune envying,
" Willed I should be his follower and his sport;
" And made, beyond each Scottish lord and knight,
" Albany's duke find favour in my sight.

VIII.

" And for he seemed to cherish me above
" All mean; his love a love as ardent bred.
" We hear, indeed, and see, but do not prove
" Man's faith, nor is his bosom's purpose read.
" Believing still, and yielding to my love,
" I ceased not till I took him to my bed;
" Nor, of all chambers, in that evil hour,
" Marked I was in Geneura's priviest bower.

IX.

" Where, hoarded, she with careful privacy
" Preserved whatever she esteemed most rare;
" There many times she slept. A gallery
" From thence projected into the open air.
" Here oft I made my lover climb to me,
" And (what he was to mount) a hempen stair,
" When him I to my longing arms would call,
" From the projecting balcony let fall.

X.

" For here my passion I as often fed
" As good Geneura's absence made me bold;
" Who with the varying season changed her bed,
" To shun the burning heat or pinching cold,
" And Albany, unseen and safely sped;
" For, fronting a dismantled street, and old,
" Was built that portion of the palace bright;
" Nor any went that way by day or night.

XI.

" So was for many days and months maintained
" By us, in secrecy, the amorous game;
" Still grew my love, and such new vigour gained,
" I in my inmost bosom felt the flame;
" And that he little loved, and deeply feigned
" Weened not, so was I blinded to my shame:
" Though, in a thousand certain signs betrayed,
" The faithless knight his base deceit bewrayed.

XII.

" After some days, of fair Geneura he
" A suitor showed himself; I cannot say
" If this began before he sighed for me,
" Or, after, of this love he made assay:
" But judge, alas! with what supremacy
" He ruled my heart, how absolute his sway!
" Since this he owned, and thought no shame to move
" Me to assist him in his second love.

XIII.

" Unlike what he bore me, he said, indeed,
" That was not true which he for her displayed:
" But so pretending love, he hoped to speed,
" And celebrate due spousals with the maid.
" He with her royal sire might well succeed,
" Were she consenting to the boon he prayed;
" For after our good king, for wealth and birth
" In all the realm, was none of equal worth.

XIV.

" Me he persuades, if through my ministry
" He the king's son-in-law elected were,
" For I must know he next the king would be
" Advanced as high, as subject could repair,
" The merit should be mine, and ever he
" So great a benefit in mind would bear;
" And he would cherish me above his bride,
" And more than every other dame beside.

XV.

" I, who to please him was entirely bent,
" Who never could or would gainsay his will,
" Upon those days alone enjoy content,
" When I find means his wishes to fulfil:
" And snatch at all occasions which present
" A mode, his praise and merits to instil:
" And for my lover with all labour strain,
" And industry, Geneura's love to gain.

XVI.

" With all my heart, in furtherance of his suit,
" I wrought what could be done, God truly knows;
" But with Geneura this produced no fruit,
" Nor her to grace my duke could I dispose.
" For that another love had taken root
" In her, whose every fond affection flows
" Towards a gentle knight of courteous lore,
" Who sought our Scotland from a distant shore:

XVII.

" And with a brother, then right young, to stay
" In our king's court, came out of Italy;
" And there of knightly arms made such assay,
" Was none in Britain more approved than he;
" Prized by the king, who (no ignoble pay),
" Rewarding him like his nobility,
" Bestowed upon the youth, with liberal hand,
" Burghs, baronies, and castles, woods and land.

XVIII.

" Dear to the monarch, to the daughter still
" This lord was dearer, Ariodantes hight.
" Her with affection might his valour fill;
" But knowledge of his love brought more delight.
" Nor old Vesuvius, nor Sicilia's hill[5],
" Nor Troy-town, ever, with a blaze so bright,
" Flamed, as with all his heart, the damsel learned,
" For love of her young Ariodantes burned.

XIX.

" The passion which she bore the lord, preferred
" And loved with perfect truth and all her heart,
" Was the occasion I was still unheard;
" Nor hopeful answer would she e'er impart:
" And still the more my lover's suit I stirred,
" And to obtain his guerdon strove with art,
" Him she would censure still, and ever more
" Was strengthened in the hate she nursed before.

XX.

" My wayward lover often I excite
" So vain and bootless an emprize to quit;
" Nor idly hope to turn her stedfast sprite,
" Too deeply with another passion smit;
" And make apparent to the Scottish knight,
" Ariodantes such a flame had lit
" In the young damsel's breast, that seas in flood
" Would not have cooled one whit her boiling blood[6].

XXI.

" This Polinesso many times had heard
" From me (for such the Scottish baron's name)
" Well warranted by sight as well as word,
" How ill his love was cherished by the dame.
" To see another to himself preferred
" Not only quenched the haughty warrior's flame,
" But the fond love which in his bosom burned
" Into despiteful rage and hatred turned.

XXII.

" Between Geneura and her faithful knight
" Such discord and ill will he schemed to shed,
" And put betwixt the pair such foul despite,
" No time should heal the quarrel he had bred;
" Bringing such scandal on that damsel bright,
" The stain should cleave to her, alive or dead:
" Nor, bent to wreck her on this fatal shelf,
" Counselled with me, or other but himself.

XXIII.

' Dalinda mine,' he said, his project brewed,
(Dalinda is my name) ' you needs must know,
' That from the root although the trunk be hewed,
' Successive suckers many times will grow[7].
' Thus my unhappy passion is renewed,
' Tenacious still of life, and buds; although
' Cut off by ill success, with new increase:
' Nor, till I compass my desire, will cease.

XXIV.

'Nor hope of pleasure this so much has wrought,
'As that to compass my design would please;
'And, if not in effect, at least in thought
'To thrive, would interpose some little ease.
'Then every time your bower by me is sought,
'When in her bed Geneura slumbers, seize
'What she puts off, and be it still your care
'To dress yourself in all her daily wear.

XXV.

'Dispose your locks and deck yourself as she
'Goes decked; and, as you can, with cunning heed,
'Imitate her; then to the gallery
'You, furnished with the corded stair, shall speed:
'I shall ascend it in the phantasy
'That you are she, of whom you wear the weed:
'And hope, that putting on myself this cheat,
'I in short time shall quench my amorous heat.'

XXVI.

"So said the knight; and I, who was distraught,
"And all beside myself, was not aware
"That the design, in which he help besought,
"Was manifestly but too foul a snare;
"And in Geneura's clothes disguised, as taught,
"Let down (so oft I used) the corded stair.
"Nor I the traitor's foul deceit perceived,
"Until the deadly mischief was achieved.

XXVII.

" The duke, this while, to Ariodantes' ears
" Had these, or other words like these, addressed;
" (For leagued in friendship were the cavaliers,
" Till, rivals, they pursued this common quest)
' I marvel, since you are of all my peers
' He, whom I most have honoured and caressed,
' And held in high regard, and cherished still,
' You should my benefits repay so ill.

XXVIII.

' I am assured you comprehend and know
' Mine and Geneura's love, and old accord;
' And, in legitimate espousal, how
' I am about to claim her from my lord:
' Then why disturb my suit, and why bestow
' Your heart on her who offers no reward?
' By Heaven, I should respect your claim and place,
' Were your condition mine, and mine your case.'

XXIX.

' And I,' cried Ariodantes, ' marvel more'
(In answer to the Scottish lord) ' at you,
' Since I of her enamoured was, before
' That gentle damsel ever met your view;
' And know, you are assured how evermore
' We two have loved;—was never love more true—
' Are certain she alone would share my lot;
' And are as well assured she loves you not.

XXX.

'Why have not I from you the same respect,
'To which, for friendship past, you would pretend
'From me; and I should bear you in effect,
'If your hope stood more fair to gain its end?
'No less than you, to wed her I expect;
'And if your fortunes here my wealth transcend,
'As favoured of the king as you, above
'You, am I happy in his daughter's love.'

XXXI.

'Of what a strange mistake,' (to him replied
The duke,) 'your foolish passion is the root!
'You think yourself beloved; I, on my side,
'Believe the same; this try we by the fruit.
'You of your own proceeding nothing hide,
'And I will tell the secrets of my suit:
'And let the man who proves least favoured, yield,
'Provide himself elsewhere, and quit the field.

XXXII.

'I am prepared, if such your wish, to swear
'Nothing of what is told me to reveal;
'And will that you assure me, for your share,
'You shall what I recount as well conceal.'
"Uniting in the pact, the rival pair
"Their solemn vows upon the Bible seal:
"And when they had the mutual promise plighted,
"Ariodantes first his tale recited.

XXXIII.

" Then plainly, and by simple facts averred,
" How with Geneura stood his suit, avows;
" And how, engaged by writing and by word,
" She swore she would not be another's spouse.
" How, if to him the Scottish king demurred,
" Virgin austerity she ever vows;
" And other bridal bond for aye eschewed,
" To pass her days in barren solitude.

XXXIV.

" Then added, how he hoped by worth, which he
" Had more than once avouched, with knightly brand,
" And yet might vouch, to the prosperity
" And honour of the king, and of his land,
" To please so well that monarch, as to be
" By him accounted worthy of the hand
" Of his fair child, espoused with his consent:
" Since he in this her wishes would content.

XXXV.

" Then so concludes—' I stand upon this ground,
' Nor I intruder fear, encroaching nigh;
' Nor seek I more; 'tis here my hopes I bound;
' Nor, striving for Geneura's love, would I
' Seek surer sign of it than what is found,
' By God allowed, in wedlock's lawful tie;
' And other suit were hopeless, am I sure,
' So excellent she is, and passing pure.'

XXXVI.

" When Ariodantes had, with honest mind,
" Told what reward he hoped should quit his pain,
" False Polinesso, who before designed
" To make Geneura hateful to her swain,
" Began—' Alas! you yet are far behind
' My hopes, and shall confess your own are vain;
' And say, as I the root shall manifest
' Of my good fortune, I alone am blest.

XXXVII.

' With you Geneura feigns, nor pays nor prizes
' Your passion, which with hopes and words is fed;
' And, more than this, your foolish love despises:
' And this to me the damsel oft has said,
' Of hers I am assured; of no surmises,
' Vain, worthless words, or idle promise bred.
' And I to you the fact in trust reveal,
' Though this I should in better faith conceal.

XXXVIII.

' There passes not a month, but in that space
' Three nights, four, six, and often ten, the fair
' Receives me with that joy in her embrace,
' Which seems to second so the warmth we share.
' This you may witness, and shall judge the case;
' If empty hopes can with my bliss compare.
' Then since my happier fortune is above
' Your wishes, yield, and seek another love.'

XXXIX.

'This will I not believe,' in answer cried
" Ariodantes, 'well assured you lie,
'And that you have this string of falsehoods tied,
'To scare me from the dear emprize I try.
'But charge, so passing foul, you shall abide,
'And vouch what you have said in arms; for I
'Not only on your tale place no reliance;
'But as a traitor hurl you my defiance.'

XL.

" To him rejoined the duke, 'I ween 'twere ill
'To take the battle upon either part,
'Since surer mean our purpose may fulfill;
'And if it please, my proof I can impart.'
" Ariodantes trembled, and a chill[8]
" Went through his inmost bones; and sick at heart,
" Had he in full believed his rival's boast,
" Would on the spot have yielded up the ghost.

XLI.

" With wounded heart, and faltering voice, pale face[9],
" And mouth of gall, he answered, 'when I see
'Proofs of thy rare adventure, and the grace
'With which the fair Geneura honours thee,
'I promise to forego the fruitless chase
'Of one, to thee so kind, so cold to me.
'But think not that thy story shall avail,
'Unless my very eyes confirm the tale.'

XLII.

' To warn you in due time shall be my care,'
(Said Polinesso) and so went his way.
" Two nights were scarcely passed, ere his repair
" To the known bower was fixed for the assay.
" And, ready now to spring his secret snare,
" He sought his rival on the appointed day,
" And him to hide, the night ensuing, prayed
" I' the street, which none their habitation made.

XLIII.

" And to the youth a station over-right
" The balcony, to which he clambered, shows.
" Ariodantes weened, this while, the knight
" Would him to seek that hidden place dispose,
" As one well suited to his fell despite,
" And, bent to take his life, this ambush chose,
" Under the false pretence to make him see
" What seemed a sheer impossibility.

XLIV.

" To go the peer resolved, but in such guise,
" He should not be with vantage overlaid;
" And should he be assaulted by surprise,
" He need not be by fear of death dismaid.
" He had a noble brother, bold and wise,
" First of the court in arms; and on his aid,
" Lurcanio hight, relied with better heart
" Than if ten others fought upon his part.

XLV.

" He called him to his side, and willed him take
" His arms; and to the place at evening led:
" Yet not his secret purpose would he break;
" Nor this to him, or other would have read:
" Him a stone's throw removed he placed, and spake:
' —Come if thou hearest me cry,' the warrior said;
' But as thou lovest me (whatsoe'er befall)
' Come not and move not, brother, till I call.'

XLVI.

' Doubt not' (the valiant brother said) ' but go;'
" And thither went that baron silently,
" And hid within the lonely house, and low,
" Over against my secret gallery.
" On the other side approached the fraudful foe,
" So pleased to work Geneura's infamy;
" And, while I nothing of the cheat divine,
" Beneath my bower renews the wonted sign.

XLVII.

" And I in costly robe, in which were set
" Fair stripes of gold upon a snowy ground,
" My tresses gathered in a golden net,
" Shaded with tassels of vermillion round,
" Mimicking fashions, which were only met
" In fair Geneura, at the accustomed sound,
" The gallery mount, constructed in such mode,
" As upon every side my person showed.

XLVIII.

" This while Lurcanio, either with a view
" To snares which might beset his brother's feet,
" Or with the common passion to pursue,
" And play the spy on other, where the street
" Was darkest, and its deepest shadows threw,
" Followed him softly to his dim retreat:
" And not ten paces from the knight aloof,
" Bestowed himself beneath the self same roof.

XLIX.

" Suspecting nought, I seek the balcony,
" In the same habits which I mentioned, dressed;
" As more than once or twice (still happily)
" I did before; meanwhile the goodly vest
" Was in the moonlight clearly seen, and I,
" In aspect not unlike her, in the rest
" Resembling much Geneura's shape and cheer,
" One visage well another might appear.

L.

" So much the more, that there was ample space
" Between the palace and the ruined row:
" Hence the two brothers, posted in that place,
" Were lightly cheated by the lying show.
" Now put yourself in his unhappy case,
" And figure what the wretched lover's woe,
" When Polinesso climbed the stair, which I
" Cast down to him, and scaled the gallery.

LI.

" Arrived, my arms about his neck I throw,
" Weening that we unseen of others meet;
" And kiss his lips and face with loving show,
" As him I hitherto was wont to greet;
" And he assayed, with more than wonted glow,
" Me to caress, to mask his hollow cheat.
" Led to the shameful spectacle, aghast,
" That other, from afar, viewed all that passed.

LII.

" And fell into such fit of deep despair,
" He there resolved to die; and, to that end,
" Planted the pommel of his falchion bare
" I' the ground, its point against his breast to bend.
" Lurcanio, who with marvel by that stair,
" Saw Polinesso to my bower ascend,
" But knew not who the wight, with ready speed
" Sprang forward, when he saw his brother's deed.

LIII.

" And hindered him in that fell agony
" From turning his own hand against his breast.
" Had the good youth been later, or less nigh,
" To his assistance he had vainly pressed.
" Then, ' Wretched brother, what insanity,'
(He cried) ' your better sense has dispossessed?
' Die for a woman! rather let her kind
' Be scattered like the mist before the wind!!

LIV.

'Compass her death! 'tis well deserved; your own
'Reserve, as due to more illustrious fate.
'Twas well to love, before her fraud was shown,
'But she, once loved, now more deserves your hate:
'Since, witnessed by your eyes, to you is known
'A wanton of what sort you worshipped late.
'Her fault before the Scottish king to attest,
'Reserve those arms you turn against your breast.'

LV.

"Ariodantes, so surprised, forewent,
"Joined by his brother, the design in show;
"But resolute to die, in his intent
"Was little shaken: Rising thence to go,
"He bears away a heart not simply rent,
"But dead and withered with excess of woe:
"Yet better comfort to Lurcanio feigns,
"As if the rage were spent which fired his veins.

LVI.

"The morn ensuing, without further say
"To his good brother, or to man beside,
"He from the city took his reckless way
"With deadly desperation for his guide;
"Nor, save the duke and knight, for many a day
"Was there who knew what moved the youth to ride:
"And in the palace, touching this event,
"And in the realm, was various sentiment.

LVII.

" But eight days past or more, to Scotland's court
" A traveller came, and to Geneura he
" Related tidings of disastrous sort;
" That Ariodantes perished in the sea:
" Drowned of his own free will was the report,
" No wind to blame for the calamity!
" Since from a rock, which over ocean hung,
" Into the raging waves he headlong sprung;

LVIII.

" Who said, before he reached that frowning crest,
" To me, whom he encountered by the way;
' Come with me, that your tongue may manifest,
' And what betides me to Geneura say;
' And tell her, too, the occasion of the rest,
' Which you shall witness without more delay;
' In having seen too much, the occasion lies;
' Happy had I been born without these eyes!'

LIX.

" By chance, upon a promontory we
" Were standing, overright the Irish shore;
" When, speaking thus on that high headland, he
" Plunged from a rock amid the watery roar.
" I saw him leap, and left him in the sea;
" And, hurrying thence, to you the tidings bore.
" Geneura stood amazed, her colour fled,
" And, at the fearful tale, remained half dead.

LX.

" O God! what said, what did she, when alone,
" She on her faithful pillow layed her head!
" She beat her bosom, and she tore her gown,
" And in despite her golden tresses shed;
" Repeating often, in bewildered tone,
" The last sad words which Ariodantes said;—
" That the sole source of such despair, and such
" Disaster, was that he had seen too much.

LXI.

" Wide was the rumour scattered that the peer
" Had slain himself for grief; nor was the cry
" By courtly dame, or courtly cavalier,
" Or by the monarch, heard with tearless eye.
" But, above all the rest, his brother dear
" Was whelmed with sorrow of so deep a dye,
" That, bent to follow him, he well nigh turned
" His hand against himself, like him he mourned.

LXII.

" And many times repeating in his thought,
" It was Geneura who his brother slew,
" Who was to self-destruction moved by nought
" But her ill deed, which he was doomed to view,
" So on his mind the thirst of vengeance wrought,
" And so his grief his reason overthrew;
" That he thought little, graced of each estate,
" To encounter king and people's common hate;

LXIII.

" And, when the throng was fullest in the hall,
" Stood up before the Scottish king, and said,
' Of having marred my brother's wits withal,
' Sir king, and him to his destruction led,
' Your daughter only can I guilty call:
' For in his inmost soul such sorrow bred
' The having seen her little chastity,
' He loathed existence, and preferred to die.

LXIV.

' He was her lover; and for his intent
' Was honest, this I seek not, I, to veil;
' And to deserve her by his valour meant
' Of thee, if faithful service might avail;
' But while he stood aloof, and dared but scent
' The blossoms, he beheld another scale,
' Scale the forbidden tree with happier boot,
' And bear away from him the wished for fruit.'

LXV.

" Then added, how into the gallery came
" Geneura, and how dropped the corded stair;
" And how into the chamber of the dame
" Had climbed a leman of that lady fair;
" Who, for disguise (he knew not hence his name),
" Had changed his habits, and concealed his hair:
" And, in conclusion, vowed that every word
" So said, he would avouch with lance and sword.

LXVI.

" You may divine how grieves the sire, distraught
" With woe, when he the accusation hears:
" As well that what he never could have thought,
" He of his daughter learns with wondering ears,
" As that he knows, if succour be not brought
" By cavalier, that in her cause appears,
" Who may upon Lurcanio prove the lie,
" He cannot choose, but doom the maid to die.

LXVII.

" I do not think our Scottish law to you
" Is yet unknown, which sentences to fire
" The miserable dame, or damsel, who
" Grants other than her wedded lord's desire.
" She dies, unless a champion, good and true,
" Arm on her side before a month expire;
" And her against the accuser base maintain
" Unmeriting such death, and free from stain.

LXVIII.

" The king has made proclaim by town and tower,
" (For he believes her wronged, his child to free)
" Her *he* shall have to wife, with ample dower,
" Who saves the royal maid from infamy.
" But each to the other looks, and to this hour
" No champion yet, 'tis said, appears: for he,
" Lurcanio, is esteemed so fierce in fight,
" It seems as he were feared of every knight.

LXIX.

" And evil Fate has willed her brother dear,
" Zerbino, is not here the foe to face;
" Since many months has roved the cavalier,
" Proving his matchless worth with spear and mace;
" For if the valiant champion were more near,
" (Such is his courage) or in any place,
" Whither in time the news might be conveyed,
" He would not fail to bear his sister aid.

LXX.

" The king, mean time, who would the quest pursue,
" And by more certain proof than combat, try
" If the accuser's tale be false or true,
" And she deserve, or merit not, to die,
" Arrests some ladies of her rétinue,
" That, as he weens, the fact can verify.
" Whence I foresaw, that if I taken were,
" Too certain risque the duke and I must share.

LXXI.

" That very night I from the palace flee,
" And to the duke repair, escaped from court;
" And, were I taken, make him plainly see
" How much it either's safety would import:
" He praised, and bade me of good courage be,
" And, for his comfort, prayed me to resort
" To a strong castle which he held hard by;
" And gave me two to bear me company.

LXXII.

" With what full proofs, sir stranger, you have heard,
" I of my love assured the Scottish peer;
" And clearly can discern, if so preferred,
" That lord was justly bound to hold me dear.
" Mark, in conclusion, what was my reward;
" The glorious meed of my great merit hear!
" And say if woman can expect to earn,
" However well she love, her love's return.

LXXIII.

" For this perfidious, foul, ungrateful man,
" At length suspicious of my faith and zeal,
" And apprehending that his wily plan,
" In course of time, I haply might reveal,
" Feigned that meanwhile the monarch's anger ran
" Too high, he would withdraw me, and conceal
" Within a fortress of his own, where I
" (Such was his real end) was doomed to die.

LXXIV.

" For secretly the duke enjoined the guide,
" Who with me through the gloomy forest went,
" The worthy guerdon of a faith so tried,
" To slay me; and had compassed his intent,
" But for your ready succour, when I cried.
" Behold! what wagers love's poor slaves content."
Thus to Rinaldo did Dalinda say,
As they together still pursued their way.

LXXV.

Above all other fortune, to the knight
Was welcome to have found the gentle maid,
Who the whole story of Geneura bright,
And her unblemished innocence displayed;
And, if he hoped, although accused with right,
To furnish the afflicted damsel aid,
Persuaded of the calumny's disproof,
He with more courage warred in her behoof.

LXXVI.

And for St. Andrew's town, with eager speed,
Where was the king with all his family,
And where the single fight, in listed mead,
Upon his daughter's quarrel, was to be,
The good Rinaldo pricked, nor spared his steed,
Until, within an easy distance, he
Now near the city, met a squire who brought
More recent tidings than the damsel taught:

LXXVII.

That thither had repaired a stranger knight,
To combat in Geneura's quarrel bent,
With ensigns strange, not known of living wight,
Since ever close concealed the warrior went;
Nor, since he had been there, had bared to sight
His visage, aye within his helmet pent:
And that the very squire who with him came,
Swore that he knew not what the stranger's name.

LXXVIII.

Not far they ride before the walls appear,
And now before the gate their coursers stand.
To advance the sad Dalinda was in fear,
Yet followed, trusting in Rinaldo's brand.
The gate was shut, and to the porter near,
'What this implies' Rinaldo makes demand:
To him was said, the people, one and all,
Were trooped to see a fight without the wall:

LXXIX.

Beyond the city, fought upon accord,
Between Lurcanio and a stranger knight;
Where, on a spacious meadow's level sward,
The pair already had begun the fight.
The porter opened to Mount Alban's lord,
And straight behind the peer the portal hight
Rinaldo through the empty city rode,
But in a hostel first the dame bestowed:

LXXX.

And wills that she (he will not long delay
To seek her there) till his return repose;
And quickly to the lists pursued his way,
Where the two made that fell exchange of blows,
And strove and struggled yet in bloody fray.
Lurcanio's heart with vengeful hatred glows
Against Geneura; while that other knight
As well maintains the quarrel for her right.

LXXXI.

Six knights on foot within the palisade
Stand covered with the corslet's iron case;
Beneath the Duke of Albany arrayed,
Borne on a puissant steed of noble race:
Who there, as lord and high-constable obeyed,
Was keeper of the field and of the place,
And joyed Geneura's peril to espy
With swelling bosom and exulting eye.

LXXXII.

Rinaldo pierces through the parted swarm,
(So wide is felt the good Bayardo's sway,)
And he who hears the courser come in storm,
Halts not, in his desire to make him way:
Above is seen Rinaldo's lofty form,
The flower of those who mix in martial fray.
He stops his horse before the monarch's chair,
While all to hear the paladin repair.

LXXXIII.

"Dread sir," to him the good Rinaldo said,
"Let not the pair this combat longer ply;
"Since whichsoever of the two falls dead,
"Know, that you let him perish wrongfully:
"*This* thinks that he is right, and is misled,
"Vouches the false, and knows not 'tis a lie:
"Since that which brought his brother to his end,
"Moves him in causeless battle to contend.

LXXXIV.

" *That,* in pure gentleness, with little care
" If what he here maintains be wrong or right,
" Because he would preserve a maid so fair,
" Perils his person in the furious fight.
" To injured innocence I safety bear,
" And to the evil man its opposite.
" But first, for love of God, the battle stay;
" Then list, sir king, to what I shall display."

LXXXV.

So moved the king the grave authority
Of one who seemed so worthy, by his cheer,
That he made sign the battle should not be
Further continued then with sword or spear:
To whom, together with his chivalry,
And barons of the realm and others near
Rinaldo all the treacherous plot displayed,
Which Polinesso for Geneura layed.

LXXXVI.

Next that he there in arms would testify
The truth of what he vouched, the warrior cried.
False Polinesso, called, with troubled eye,
Stood forth, but daringly the tale denied.
To him the good Rinaldo in reply;
" By deeds be now the doubtful quarrel tried."
The field was cleared, and, ready armed, the foes,
Without more let, in deadly duel close.

LXXXVII.

How was the hope to king and people dear,
The proof might show Geneura innocent!
All trust that God will make the treason clear,
And show she was accused with foul intent:
For Polinesso, greedy and severe,
And proud was held, and false and fraudulent.
So that none there, of all assembled, deemed
It marvel, if the knight such fraud had schemed.

LXXXVIII.

False Polinesso, with a mien distressed,
A pallid cheek, and heart which thickly beat,
At the third trumpet, layed his lance in rest;
As well Rinaldo spurred the knight to meet,
And levelled at his evil foeman's breast,
Eager to finish at a single heat.
Nor counter to his wish was the event;
Since through the warrior half his weapon went.

LXXXIX.

Him, through his breast, impaled upon the spear,
More than six yards beyond his horse he bore.
With speed alighted Mount Albano's peer,
And, ere he rose, unlaced the helm he wore:
But he for mercy prayed with humble cheer,
Unfit to strive in joust or warfare more:
And, before king and court, with faltering breath,
Confessed the fraud which brought him to his death.

XC.

He brings not his confession to a close,
And pangs of death the failing accents drown:
The prince, who ended saw his daughter's woes,
Redeemed from death and scorn, her virtue shown,
With more delight and rapture overflows,
Than if he, having lost his kingly crown,
Then saw it first upon his head replaced;
So that he good Rinaldo singly graced.

XCI.

And when, through his uplifted casque displaid,
Features, well known before, the king descried,
His thanks to God with lifted hands he paid,
That he had deigned such succour to provide.
That other cavalier, who bared his blade,
Unknown of all, upon Geneura's side,
And thither came from far, his aid to impart,
Looked upon all that passed, and stood apart.

XCII.

Him the good king entreated to declare
His name, or, at the least, his visage shew;
That he might grace him with such guerdon fair,
As to his good intent was justly due.
The stranger, after long and earnest prayer,
Lifted the covering casque, and bared to view
What in the ensuing canto will appear[10],
If you are fain the history to hear.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1.

Among all other animals who prey
On earth, or who unite in friendly wise,
Whether they meet in peace or moody fray,
No male offends his mate: in safety lies
The she-bear, matched with hers, through forest gray.
Stanza i. lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Alberto Lavezuola commenting on this stanza, observes (I translate his words), "It would not appear absolutely true that in other descriptions of animals, man excepted, the male does not sometimes war upon the female, and I have read in a worthy author of a he-bear having beat out the eye of a she-bear with his paw." Without sacrificing the gallantry of brutes to a single exception, and *that*, moreover, of a bear, it would appear (to weigh the passage with the precision in which the old commentators delight) that Ariosto had laid down this rule of conduct among animals (I use animals in the common sense of the word), as more universal than I believe it is: but, on the other hand, it is certain that the savage beast is infinitely more generous on the point in question than the savage man; and Ariosto, in the latitude allowed to poets, seems to have sufficient grounds for his justification.

2.

And blows and outrage base their peace molest,
And bitter tears still wash the genial bed.
Stanza ii. lines 5 and 6.

"Semper habet lites alternaque jurgia lectus."
JUVENAL, SAT. viii.

C.

Not simply a rank sinner, he appears
To outrage nature, and his God to dare,
Who his foul hand against a woman rears, &c.
Stanza iii. lines 1, 2, 3.

" At lapis est, ferrumque, suam quicunque puellam
" Verberat; e cœlo diripit ille Deos."
TIBULLUS.

4.

" *Of direr deed than ever yet was done,*"
The gentle dame began, " *Sir cavalier,*
" *In Thebes, Mycene, Argos, or upon*
" *Other more savage soil, prepare to hear;*
" *And I believe, that if the circling sun*
" *To these our Scottish shores approach less near*
" *Than other land, 'tis that he would eschew*
" *A foul ferocious race, that shocks his view.*"
Stanza v.

The story of Geneura is familiar to every English reader, as forming the plot of MUCH-ADO-ABOUT-NOTHING.

Shakespeare has been by some considered as indebted to Ariosto for this tale; but it is clear that he borrowed from a later transcript of it. I cannot trace it higher than the Italian poet, but should have little doubt that he derived it from some ancient novellist.

The first seat of civilization being in the south, it was natural that the southern people should consider proximity to the sun as a test of refinement: and hence Virgil's

Nec tam aversus equos Tyriâ Sol jungit ab urbe.

5.

Nor old Vesuvius, nor Sicilia's hill,
Nor Troy-town, ever with a blaze so bright
Flamed as the damsel's breast, &c.
Stanza xviii. lines 5, 6, 7.

If Ariosto is not so happy in this as in many other of his

hyperboles, he has a classical authority for it in Catullus's

" Qui tantum arderet quantum Trinacria rupes ;"

for his next sally,

6.

Ariodantes such a flame had lit
In the young damsel's breast, that seas in flood
Would not have cooled one whit her boiling blood,
Stanza xx. lines 6, 7, 8.

I do not know of any precedent; and it must be confessed that such strokes of extravagance in pictures of passion are unredeemed by their humour.

7.

You needs must know
That from the root, although the trunk be hewed,
Successive suckers many times will grow.
Stanza xxiii. lines 2, 3, 4.

" Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus,
" Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
" Ducit opes animumque ferro."
HORACE, ODE 4th.

8.

And a chill
Went through his inmost bones.
Stanza xl. lines 5 and 6.

" gelidusque per ima cucurrit
" Ossa tremor."
VIRGIL.

9.

With wounded heart, with faltering voice, pale face,
And mouth of gall.
Stanza xli. lines 1 and 2.

The faltering voice and pale face are indications of passion

sufficiently obvious and common; but I do not recollect any other author who has alluded to the last circumstance in this description—that bitter, poisonous taste, which is sometimes created in the mouth by any painful and unexpected impression.

10.

What in the ensuing canto will appear,
If you are fain the history to hear.

Stanza xcii. lines 7 and 8.

Ariosto, like Boiardo, usually finishes the canto, and often suspends the narrative, at the most interesting part of a story. This artifice is always practised by the itinerant eastern tale-tellers, with the view of whetting the curiosity of their hearers; and hence the divisions in *The Arabian Nights.*

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.

Ariodantes has, a worthy meed,
With his loved bride, the fief of Albany.
Meantime Rogero, on the flying steed,
Arrives in false Alcina's empery:
There from a myrtle-tree her every deed,
A human myrtle hears, and treachery,
And thence would go; but they who first withdrew
Him from one strife, engage him in a new.

THE ORLANDO FURIOSO.

CANTO VI.

I.

WRETCHED that evil man who lives in trust
His secret sin is safe in his possession!
Since, if nought else, the air, the very dust
In which the crime is buried, makes confession,
And oftentimes his guilt compels the unjust,
Though sometime unarraigned in worldly session,
To be his own accuser, and bewray,
So God has willed, deeds hidden from the day.

II.

The unhappy Polinesso hopes had nursed,
Wholly his secret treason to conceal,
By taking off Dalinda, who was versed
In this, and only could the fact reveal;
And adding thus a second to his first
Offence, but hurried on the dread appeal,
Which haply he had shunned, at least deferred;
But he to self-destruction blindly spurred.

III.

And forfeited estate, and life, and love
Of friends at once, and honour, which was more.
The cavalier unknown, I said above,
Long of the king and court entreated sore,
At length the covering helmet did remove,
And showed a visage often seen before,
The cherished face of Ariodantes true,
Of late lamented weeping Scotland through;

IV.

Ariodantes, whom with tearful eye
His brother and Geneura wept as dead,
And king, and people, and nobility:
Such light his goodness and his valour shed.
The pilgrim therefore might appear to lie
In what he of the missing warrior said.
Yet was it true that from a headland, he
Had seen him plunge into the foaming sea.

V.

But, as it oft befalls despairing wight,
Who grisly Death desires till he appear;
But loathes what he had sought, on nearer sight;
So painful seems the cruel pass and drear.
Thus, in the sea engulphed, the wretched knight,
Repentant of his deed, was touched with fear;
And, matchless both for spirit and for hand,
Beat back the billows, and returned to land.

VI.

And, now despising, as of folly bred,
The fond desire which did to death impell,
Thence, soaked and dripping wet, his way did tread,
And halted at a hermit's humble cell:
And housed within the holy father's shed,
There secretly awhile designed to dwell;
Till to his ears by rumour should be voiced,
If his Geneura sorrowed or rejoiced.

VII.

At first he heard that, through excess of woe,
The miserable damsel well-nigh died:
For so abroad the doleful tidings go,
'Twas talked of in the island, far and wide:
Far other proof than that deceitful show,
Which to his cruel grief he thought he spied!
And next against the fair Geneura heard,
Lurcanio to her sire his charge preferred:

VIII.

Nor for his brother felt less enmity
Than was the love he lately bore the maid;
For he too foul, and full of cruelty,
Esteemed the deed, although for him essayed;
And, hearing after, in her jeopardy,
That none appeared to lend the damsel aid,
Because so puissant was Lurcanio's might,
All dreaded an encounter with the knight,

IX.

And that who well the youthful champion knew,
Believed he was so wary and discreet,
That, had what he related been untrue,
He never would have risqued so rash a feat,
—For this the greater part the fight eschew,
Fearing in wrongful cause the knight to meet—
Ariodantes (long his doubts are weighed)
Will meet his brother in Geneura's aid.

X.

" Alas! (he said) I cannot bear to see
" Thus by my cause the royal damsel die;
" My death too bitter and too dread would be,
" Did I, before my own, her death descry;
" For still my lady, my divinity
" She is;—the light and comfort of my eye.
" Her, right or wrong, I cannot choose but shield,
" And for her safety perish in the field,

XI.

" I know I choose the wrong, and be it so!
" And in the cause shall die: nor this would move;
" But that, alas! my death, as well I know,
" Will such a lovely dame's destruction prove.
" To death I with one only comfort go,
" That, if her Polinesso bears her love,
" To her will manifestly be displayed,
" That hitherto he moves not in her aid.

XII.

" And me, so wronged by her, the maid shall view
" Encounter death in her defence; and he,
" My brother, who such flames of discord blew,
" Shall pay the debt of vengeance due to me.
" For well I ween to make Lurcanio rue
" (Informed of the event) his cruelty,
" Who will have thought to venge me with his brand,
" And will have slain me with his very hand."

XIII.

He, having this concluded in his thought,
Made new provision of arms, steed, and shield;
Black was the vest and buckler which he bought,
Where green and yellow striped the sable field:
By hazard found, with him a squire he brought,
A stranger in that country; and, concealed
(As is already told) the unhappy knight,
Against his brother came, prepared for fight.

XIV.

The issue of the event was told above;
How prince and people Ariodantes knew.
Nor less delight the Scottish king did prove
Than when the knight the accuser overthrew:
Within himself he thought that never love
In man was shown so constant and so true;
Who, though so foully wronged, prepared to stake
His life against his brother's for her sake:

XV.

And yielding to his natural inclination,
And at the suit of all his court beside,
And mostly at Rinaldo's instigation,
Assigned the youth the damsel as his bride.
Albany's duchy, now in sequestration,
Late Polinesso's, who in duel died,
Could not be forfeited in happier hour;
Since this the monarch made his daughter's dower.

XVI.

Rinaldo for Dalinda mercy won;
Who from her fault's due punishment went free.
She, satiate of the world, (and this to shun,
The damsel so had vowed) to God will flee:
And hence, in Denmark's land, to live a nun[3],
Straight from her native Scotland sailed the sea.
But it is time Rogero to pursue,
Who on his courser posts the welkin through.

XVII.

Although Rogero is of constant mind,
Nor from his cheek the wonted hues depart,
I ween that faster than a leaf i' the wind
Fluttered within his breast the stripling's heart.
All Europe's region he had left behind
In his swift course; and, issuing in that part,
Passed by a mighty space, the southern sound
Where great Alcides fixed the sailor's bound[4].

XVIII.

That hypogriph, huge fowl, and strange to sight,
Bears off the warrior with such rapid wing,
He would have distanced, in his airy flight,
The thunder-bearing bird of Æther's king:
Nor other living creature soars such height,
Him in his mighty swiftness equalling.
I scarce believe that bolt, or lightning flies,
Or darts more swiftly from the parted skies.

XIX.

When the huge bird his pinions long had plied,
In a straight line, without one stoop or bend,
He, tired of air, with sweeping wheel and wide,
Began upon an island to descend;
Like that fair region, whither, long unspied[5]
Of him, her wayward mood did long offend,
Whilom in vain, through strange and secret sluice,
Passed under sea the Virgin Arethuse.

XX.

A more delightful place, wherever hurled
Through the whole air, Rogero had not found:
And, had he ranged the universal world,
Would not have seen a lovelier in his round,
Than that, where, wheeling wide, the courser furled
His spreading wings, and lighted on the ground,
'Mid cultivated plain, delicious hill,
Moist meadow, shady bank, and crystal rill.

XXI.

Small thickets, with the scented laurel gay,
Cedar, and orange, full of fruit and flower,
Myrtle and palm, with interwoven spray,
Pleached in mixed modes, all lovely, form a bower;
And, breaking with their shade the scorching ray,
Make a cool shelter from the noontide hour.
And nightingales among those branches wing
Their flight, and safely amorous descants sing.

XXII.

Amid red roses and white lilies there,
Which the soft breezes freshen as they fly,
Secure the cony haunts, and timid hare,
And stag, with branching forehead broad and high.
These, fearless of the hunter's dart or snare,
Feed at their ease, or ruminating lie;
While, swarming in those wilds, from tuft or steep
Dun deer or nimble goat, disporting, leap.

XXIII.

When the hyppogriph above the island hung,
And had approached so nigh that landscape fair,
That, if his rider from the saddle sprung,
He might the leap with little danger dare,
Rogero lit the grass and flowers amoñg,
But held him, lest he should remount the air;
And to a myrtle, nigh the rolling brine,
Made fast, between a bay-tree and a pine.

XXIV.

And there, close-by where rose a bubbling fount,
Begirt with fertile palm and cedar-tree,
He drops the shield, the helmet from his front
Uplifts, and, either hand from gauntlet free,
Now turning to the beach, and now the mount,
Catches the gales which blow from hill or sea,
And, with a joyous murmur, lightly stir
The lofty top of beech, or feathery fir:

XXV.

And, now, to bathe his burning lips he strains;
Now dabbles in the crystal wave, to chase
The scorching heat which rages in his veins,
Caught from the heavy corslet's burning case.
Nor is it marvel if the burden pains;
No ramble his in square or market-place!
Three thousand miles, without repose, he went,
And still, at speed, in ponderous armour pent.

XXVI.

Meanwhile the courser by the myrtle's side,
Whom he left stabled in the cool retreat,
Started at something in the wood descried,
Scared by I know not what; and in his heat
So made the myrtle shake where he was tied,
He brought a shower of leaves about his feet;
He made the myrtle shake and foliage fall,
But, struggling, could not loose himself withal.

XXVII.

As in a stick to feed the chimney rent,
Where scanty pith ill fills the narrow sheath,
The vapour, in its little channel pent,
Struggles, tormented by the fire beneath;
And, till its prisoned fury find a vent,
Is heard to hiss and bubble, sing and seethe:
So the offended myrtle inly pined,
Groaned, murmured, and at last unclosed its rind:

XXVIII.

And hence a clear, intelligible speech[6]
Thus issued, with a melancholy sound;
" If, as thy cheer and gentle presence teach,
" Thou courteous art and good, his rein unbound,
" Release me from this monster, I beseech:
" Griefs of my own inflict sufficient wound:
" Nor need I, compassed with such ills about,
" Other new pain to plague me from without."

XXIX.

At the first sound, Rogero turns to see
Whence came the voice, and, in unused surprise,
Stands, when he finds it issues from the tree;
And swiftly to remove the courser hies.
Then, with a face suffused with crimson, he
In answer to the groaning myrtle, cries;
" Pardon! and, whatsoe'er thou art, be good,
" Spirit of man, or goddess of the wood!

XXX.

" Unweeting of the wonderous prodigy
" Of spirit, pent beneath the knotty rind,
" To your fair leaf and living body I
" Have done this scathe and outrage undesigned.
" But not the less for that, to me reply,
" What art thou, who, in rugged case confined,
" Dost live and speak? And so may never hail
" From angry heaven your gentle boughs assail!

XXXI.

" And if I now or ever the despite
" I did thee can repair, or aid impart,
" I, by that lady dear, my promise plight,
" Who in her keeping has my better part,
" To strive with word and deed, till thou requite
" The service done with praise and grateful heart."
Rogero said; and, as he closed his suit,
That gentle myrtle shook from top to root.

XXXII.

Next drops were seen to stand upon the bark,
As juice is sweated by the sapling-spray,
New-severed, when it yields to flame and spark,
Sometime in vain kept back and held at bay.
And next the voice began; " My story dark,
" Forced by thy courteous deed, I shall display;—
" What once I was—by whom, through magic lore,
" Changed to a myrtle on the pleasant shore.

XXXIII.

" A peer of France, Astolpho was my name[7],
" Whilom a paladin, sore feared in fight;
" Cousin I was to two of boundless fame,
" Orlando and Rinaldo. I by right
" Looked to all England's crown; my lawful claim
" After my royal father, Otho hight.
" More dames than one my beauty served to warm,
" And in conclusion wrought my single harm.

XXXIV.

" Returning from those isles, whose eastern side
" The billows of the Indian ocean beat,
" Where good Rinaldo and more knights beside
" With me were pent in dark and hollow seat,
" Thence, rescued by illustrious Brava's pride *,
" Whose prowess freed us from that dark retreat,
" Westward I fared along the sandy shores,
" On which the stormy north his fury pours.

XXXV.

" Pursuing thus our rugged journey, we
" Came (such our evil doom) upon the strand;
" Where stood a mansion seated by the sea:
" Puissant Alcina owned the house and land.
" We found her, where, without her dwelling, she
" Had taken on the beach her lonely stand;
" And though nor hook nor sweeping net she bore,
" What fish she willed, at pleasure drew to shore.

* Orlando.

XXXVI.

" Thither swift dolphins gambol, inly stirred,
" And open-mouthed the cumbrous tunnies leap;
" Thither the seal or porpus' wallowing herd
" Troop at her bidding, roused from lazy sleep;
" Raven-fish, salmon, salpouth, at her word,
" And mullet hurry through the briny deep.
" With monstrous backs above the water, sail
" Ork, physeter, sea-serpent, shark, and whale[8].

XXXVII.

" There we behold a mighty whale, of size[9]
" The hugest yet in any waters seen:
" More than eleven paces, to our eyes,
" His back appears above the surface green:
" And (for still firm and motionless he lies,
" And such the distance his two ends between)
" We all are cheated by the floating pile,
" And idly take the monster for an isle.

XXXVIII.

" Alcina made the ready fish obey
" By simple words and by mere magic lore:
" Born with Morgana[10]—but I cannot say
" If at one birth, or after or before.
" As soon as seen, my aspect pleased the fay;
" Who showed it in the countenance she wore:
" Then wrought with art, and compassed her intent,
" To part me from the friends with whom I went.

XXXIX.

" She came towards us with a cheerful face,
" With graceful gestures, and a courteous air,
" And said; 'so you my lodging please to grace,
'Sir cavalier, and will with me repair,
'You shall behold the wonders of my chace,
'And note the different sorts of fish I snare;
'Shaggy or smooth, or clad in scales of light,
'And more in number than the stars of night:

XL.

'And would you hear a mermaid sing so sweet,
'That the rude sea grows civil at her song,
'Wont at this hour her music to repeat,
(With that she showed the monster huge and long
—I said it seemed an island—as her seat)
'Pass with me where she sings the shoals among.'
" I, that was always wilful, at her wish,
" I now lament my rashness, climb the fish.

XLI.

" To Dudon and Rinaldo's signal blind,
" I go, who warn me to misdoubt the fay.
" With laughing face Alcina mounts behind,
" Leaving the other two beside the bay.
" The obedient fish performs the task assigned,
" And through the yielding water works his way.
" Repentant of my deed, I curse the snare,
" Too far from land my folly to repair.

XLII.

" To aid me swam Mount Alban's cavalier *,
" And was nigh drowned amid the waves that rise;
" For a south-wind sprang up that, far and near
" Covered with sudden darkness seas and skies.
" I know not after what befel the peer:
" This while Alcina to console me tries,
" And all that day, and night which followed, me
" Detained upon that monster in mid-sea.

XLIII.

" Till to this isle we drifted with the morn,
" Of which Alcina keeps a mighty share;
" By that usurper from a sister torn,
" Who was her father's universal heir:
" For that she only was in wedlock born,
" And for those other two false sisters were
" (So well-instructed in the story, said
" One who rehearsed the tale) in incest bred.

XLIV.

" As these are practised in iniquity,
" And full of every vice and evil art;
" So she, who ever lives in chastity,
" Wisely on better things has set her heart.
" Hence, leagued against her, in conspiracy,
" Those others are, to drive her from her part:
" And more than once their armies have o'errun
" Her realm, and towns above a hundred won.

* Rinaldo.

XLV.

" Nor at this hour a single span of ground
" Would Logistilla (such her name) command,
" But that a mountain here, and there a sound,
" Protects the remnant from the invading band.
" 'Tis thus the mountain and the river bound
" England, and part it from the Scottish land.
" Yet will the sisters give their foe no rest,
" Till of her scanty remnant dispossest.

XLVI.

" Because in wickedness and vice were bred
" The pair, as chaste and good they loath the dame.
" But, to return to what I lately said,
" And to relate how I a plant became;
" Me, full of love, the kind Alcina fed
" With full delights; nor I a weaker flame
" For her, within my burning heart did bear,
" Beholding her so courteous and so fair.

XLVII.

" Clasped in her dainty limbs, and lapt in pleasure,
" I weened that I each separate good had won,
" Which to mankind is dealt in different measure,
" Little or more to some, and much to none.
" I evermore contemplated my treasure,
" Nor France nor aught beside I thought upon:
" In her my every fancy, every hope
" Centered and ended as their common scope.

XLVIII.

" By her I was as much beloved, or more;
" Nor did Alcina now for other care;
" She left her every lover; for before,
" Others, in truth, the fairy's love did share:
" I was her close adviser evermore;
" And served by her, where they commanded were.
" With me she counselled, and to me referred;
" Nor, night nor day, to other spake a word.

XLIX.

" Why touch my wounds, to aggravate my ill,
" And that, alas! without the hope of cure?
" Why thus the good possessed remember still,
" Amid the cruel penance I endure?
" When kindest I believed Alcina's will,
" And fondly deemed my happiness secure,
" From me the heart she gave, the fay withdrew,
" And yielded all her soul to love more new.

L.

" Late I discerned her light and fickle bent,
" Still loving and unloving at a heat:
" Two months, I reigned not more, no sooner spent,
" Than a new paramour assumed my seat;
" And me, with scorn, she doomed to banishment,
" From her fair grace cast out. 'Tis then I weet
" I share a thousand lovers' fate, whom she
" Had to like pass reduced, all wrongfully.

LI.

" And these, because they should not scatter bruits,
" Roaming the world, of her lascivious ways,
" She, up and down the fruitful soil, transmutes
" To olive, palm, or cedar, firs or bays.
" These, as you see me changed, Alcina roots;
" While this transformed into a monster strays;
" Another melts into a liquid rill;
" As suits that haughty fairy's wanton will.

LII.

" Thou, too, that to this fatal isle art led
" By way unwonted and till now unknown,
" That some possessor of the fairy's bed,
" May be for thee transformed to wave or stone,
" Thou shalt, with more than mortal pleasures fed,
" Have from Alcina seigniory and throne;
" But shalt be sure to join the common flock,
" Transformed to beast or fountain, plant or rock.

LIII.

" I willingly to thee this truth impart,
" Not that I hope with profit to advise:
" Yet 'twill be better, that informed, in part,
" Of her false ways, she harm not by surprise.
" Perhaps, as faces differ, and in art
" And wit of man an equal difference lies,
" Thou may'st some remedy perchance apply
" To the ill, which thousand others could not fly."

LIV.

The good Rogero, who from Fame had learned
That he was cousin to the dame he wooed,
Lamented much the sad Astolpho, turned
From his true form, to barren plant and rude:
And for her love, for whom so sore he burned,
Would gladly serve the stripling if he cou'd:
But, witless how to give the wished relief,
Might but console the unhappy warrior's grief.

LV.

As best he could, he strove to soothe his pain;
Then asked him, if to Logistil's retreat
Were passage, whether over hill or plain;
That he might so eschew Alcina's seat.
—'There was a way,' the myrtle said again,
—'But rough with stones, and rugged to the feet—
'If he, some little further to the right,
'Would scale the Alpine mountain's very height:

LVI.

'But that he must not think he shall pursue
'The intended journey far; since by the way
'He will encounter with a frequent crew,
'And fierce, who serve as rampart to the fay,
'That block the road against the stranger, who
'Would break her bounds, and the deserter stay.'
Rogero thanked the tree for all, and taught,
Departed thence with full instructions fraught.

LVII.

The courser from the myrtle he untied,
And by the bridle led behind him still;
Nor would he, as before, the horse bestride,
Lest he should bear him off against his will:
He mused this while how safely he might find
A passage to the land of Logistil;
Firm in his purpose every nerve to strain,
Lest empire over him Alcina gain.

LVIII.

He to remount the steed, and through the air
To spur him to a new career again
Now thought; but doubted next, in fear to fare
Worse on the courser, restive to the rein.
"No, I will win by force the mountain-stair,"
Rogero said; (but the resolve was vain)
Nor by the beach two miles his way pursued,
Ere he Alcina's lovely city viewed.

LIX.

A lofty wall at distance meets his eye
Which girds a spacious town within its bound;
It seems as if its summit touched the sky,
And all appears like gold from top to ground.
Here some one says it is but alchemy,
—And haply his opinion is unsound—
And haply he more wittily divines:
For me; I deem it gold because it shines.

LX.

When he was nigh the city-walls, so bright,
The world has not their equal, he the straight
And spacious way deserts, the way which dight
Across the plain, conducted to the gate;
And by that safer road upon the right,
Strains now against the mountain; but, in wait,
Encounters soon the crowd of evil foes,
Who furiously the Child's advance oppose.

LXI.

Was never yet beheld a stranger band[11],
Of mien more hideous, or more monstrous shape.
Formed downwards from the neck like men, he scanned
Some with the head of cat, and some of ape;
With hoof of goat that other stamped the sand;
While some seemed centaurs, quick in fight and rape;
Naked, or mantled in outlandish skin,
These doting sires, those striplings bold in sin.

LXII.

This gallops on a horse without a bit;
This backs the sluggish ass, or bullock slow;
These mounted on the croup of centaur sit;
Those perched on eagle, crane, or estridge, go.
Some male, some female, some hermaphrodit',
These drain the cup and those the bugle blow.
One bore a corded ladder, one a hook;
One a dull file, or bar of iron shook.

LXIII.

The captain of this crew, which blocked the road,
Appeared, with monstrous paunch and bloated face;
Who a slow tortoise for a horse bestrode,
That passing sluggishly with him did pace:
Down looked, some here, some there, sustained the load,
For he was drunk, and kept him in his place.
Some wipe his brows and chin from sweat which ran,
And others with their vests his visage fan.

LXIV.

One, with a human shape and feet, his crest,
Fashioned like hound, in neck and ears and head,
Bayed at the gallant Child with angry quest,
To turn him to the city whence he fled.
"That will I never, while of strength possessed
"To brandish this," the good Rogero said:
With that his trenchant faulchion he displayed,
And pointed at him full the naked blade.

LXV.

That monster would have smote him with a spear,
But swiftly at his foe Rogero sprung,
Thrust at his paunch, and drove his faulchion sheer
Through his pierced back a palm; his buckler flung
Before him, and next sallied there and here:
But all too numerous was the wicked throng.
Now grappled from behind, now punched before,
He stands, and plies the crowd with warfare sore.

LXVI.

One to the teeth, another to the breast,
Of that foul race he cleft; since no one steeled
In mail, his brows with covering helmet dressed,
Or fought, secured by corslet or by shield;
Yet is he so upon all quarters pressed,
That it would need the Child, to clear the field,
And to keep off the wicked crew which swarms,
More than Briareus' hundred hands and arms.

LXVII.

If he had thought the magic shield to show,
(I speak of that the necromancer bore,
Which dazed the sight of the astonished foe,
Left at his saddle by the wizard Moor)
That hideous band, in sudden overthrow,
Blinded by this, had sunk the knight before.
But haply he despised such mean as vile,
And would prevail by valour, not by guile.

LXVIII.

This as it may: the child would meet his fate,
Ere by so vile a band be prisoner led;
When, lo! forth-issuing from the city's gate,
Whose wall appeared like shining gold I said,
Two youthful dames, not born in low estate,
If measured by their mien and garb, nor bred
By swain, in early wants and troubles versed;
But amid princely joys in palace nursed!

LXIX.

On unicorn was seated either fair,
A beast than spotless ermine yet more white;
So lovely were the damsels, and so rare
Their garb, and with such graceful fashion dight,
That he who closely viewed the youthful pair,
Would need a surer sense than mortal sight,
To judge between the two. With such a mien
Embodied GRACE and BEAUTY would be seen.

LXX.

Into the mead rode this and the other dame,
Where the foul crew opposed the Child's retreat.
The rabble scattered as the ladies came,
Who with extended hand the warrior greet.
He, with a kindling visage, red with shame,
Thanked the two damsels for their gentle feat;
And was content upon their will to wait,
With them returning to that golden gate.

LXXI.

Above, a cornice round the gateway goes,
Somedeal projecting from the colonnade,
In which is not a single part but glows,
With rarest gems of India overlaid.
Propp'd at four points, the portal did repose
On columns of one solid diamond made.
Whether what met the eye was false or true,
Was never sight more fair or glad to view.

LXXII.

Upon the sill and through the columns there,
Ran young and wanton girls, in frolic sport;
Who haply yet would have appeared more fair,
Had they observed a woman's fitting port.
All are arrayed in green[12], and garlands wear
Of the fresh leaf. Him these in courteous sort,
With many proffers and fair mien entice,
And welcome to this opening Paradise:

LXXIII.

For so with reason I this place may call,
Where, it is my belief, that Love had birth;
Where life is spent in festive game and ball,
And still the passing moments fleet in mirth.
Here hoary-headed Thought ne'er comes at all,
Nor finds a place in any bosom. Dearth,
Nor yet Discomfort, never enter here,
Where Plenty fills her horn throughout the year.

LXXIV.

Here, where with jovial and unclouded brow,
Glad April seems to wear a constant smile,
Troop boys and damsels: One, where fountains flow,
On the green margin sings in dulcet style;
Others, the hill or tufted tree below,
In dance, or no mean sport the hours beguile.
While this, who shuns the revellers' noisy cheer,
Tells his love sorrows in his comrade's ear.

LXXV.

Above the laurel and the pine-tree's height,
Through the tall beech and shaggy fir-tree's spray,
Sport little loves, with desultory flight:
These, at their conquests made, rejoiced and gay:
These, with the well-directed shaft, take sight
At hearts, and those spread nets to catch their prey:
One wets his arrows in the brook which winds,
And one on whirling stone the weapon grinds.

LXXVI.

To good Rogero here was brought a steed,
Puissant and nimble, all of sorel hue;
Who was caparisoned with costly weed,
Broidered with gold, and jewels bright to view.
That other winged horse, which, at his need,
Obedient to the Moorish wizard flew,
The friendly damsels to a youth consigned,
Who led him at a slower pace behind.

LXXVII.

That kindly pair who, by the wicked band
Offended late, had saved the youthful knight;
The wicked crew, that did the Child withstand,
When he the road had taken on his right,
Exclaimed, " Fair sir, your works already scanned
" By us, who are instructed of your might,
" Embolden us, in our behalf, to pray
" You will the prowess of your arm assay.

LXXVIII.

" We soon shall reach a bottom which divides
" The plain into two parts: A cruel dame
" A bridge maintains, which there a stream bestrides,
" Eriphila the savage beldam's name;
" Who cheats, and robs, and scathes, whoever rides
" To the other shore, a giantess in frame;
" Who has long poisonous teeth her prey to tear,
" And scratches with her talons like a bear.

LXXIX.

" Besides that she infests the public way,
" Which else were free; she often ranging through
" All this fair garden, puts in disarray
" This thing or that. Of the assassin crew,
" That people who without the portal gay,
" Lately with brutal rage assaulted you,
" Many her sons, the whole her followers call,
" As greedy and inhospitable all."

LXXX.

" For you not only her I would assail,
" But do a hundred battles, well content:
" Then of my person, where it may avail,
" Dispose (Rogero said) to your intent.
" Silver and land to conquer, plate or mail
" I wear not, I, in warlike cuirass pent;
" But to afford my aid to others due;
" And, most of all, to beauteous dames like you."

LXXXI.

Their grateful thanks the ladies, worthily
Bestowed on such a valiant champion, paid:
They talking thus the bridge and river see,
And at her post the haughty dame arraid
(Sapphire and emerald decked the panoply)
In arms of gold: but I awhile delay
Till other strain the issue of the fray.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1.

the air, the very dust
In which the crime is buried, makes confession.
Stanza i. lines 3 and 4.

Perhaps suggested by Juvenal's

" Nocte quidem; sed luna videt, sed sidera testes
" Intendunt oculos."

2.

Black was the vest and buckler which he bought,
Where green and yellow striped the sable field.
Stanza xiii. lines 3 and 4.

Much importance, during the middle ages, and those which immediately followed, was attached to colours, as emblematical of character or situation. Hence Ariodantes chooses black, and the hue of the " sear and yellow leaf," as symbolical of his forlorn condition.

3.

——— *in Denmark's land to live a nun.*
Stanza xvi. line 5.

In the original Dazia; a name which is given to many northern countries. As, among others, I find it applied to Denmark, I have followed the commentator, nearest to the time of Ariosto, who conceives that such was the meaning of his author, in so interpreting it.

4.

Where great Alcides fixéd the sailor's bound.
Stanza xvii. line 8.

Translated from Dante's

" Ove Ercole segnò li suoi riguardi."

5.

Like that fair region, whither, long unspied
Of him, her wayward mood did long offend,
Whilom in vain, through strange and secret sluice,
Passed under sea the Virgin Arethuse.

Stanza xix. lines 5, 6, 7, 8.

"Arethusa (as may be read in Lempriere's Classical Dictionary) was a nymph of Elis, daughter of Oceanus, and one of Diana's attendants. As she returned one day from hunting, she sat near the Alpheus, and bathed in the stream. The god of the river was enamoured of her, and pursued her, when Arethusa, ready to sink under fatigue, prayed to Diana, who changed her into a fountain. Alpheus immediately mingled his streams with hers, and Diana opened a secret passage under the earth and under the sea, where the waters of Arethusa disappeared, rising in the island of Ortygia, near Syracuse, in Sicily. The river Alpheus, too, followed her under the sea, and rose also in Ortygia; so that, as mythologists relate, whatever is thrown into the Alpheus in Elis, rises again, after some time, in the fountain of Arethusa near Syracuse."

6.

As in a stick to feed the chimney rent,
Where scanty pith ill fills the narrow sheath,
The vapour, in its little channel pent,
Struggles, tormented by the fire beneath;
And, till its prisoned fury find a vent,
Is heard to hiss and bubble, sing and seethe:
So the offended myrtle inly pined,
Groaned, murmured, and at last unclosed its rind:

Stanza xxvii.

And hence a clear, intelligible speech
Thus issued.

Stanza xxviii. lines 1 and 2.

For the beginning of the first stanza cited, the author is again indebted to Dante. I cannot here agree with one of his commentators in the opinion that he has improved the image of his

original by expanding it: I think, on the contrary, though Ariosto's stanza is a very pretty one, that the idea has suffered from dilation. Dante says (applying the simile also to a limb torn from a man, transformed into a tree)

Come d'un stizzo verde ch' arco sia
Da l'un de' lati, che da l'altro geme,
E cigola per vento, che và via

L'Inferno, canto xiii.

As a brand yet green,
Which burning at one end from the other sends
A groaning sound, and hisses with the wind
That forces out its way.

Carey's Translation.

Where Rogero also offers, if in his power, to compensate the myrtle for the injury he had inflicted, Ariosto has followed Dante, describing the same prodigy, in his xiiith canto. Both imitated Virgil in the main fact; but Ariosto in the end of the xxviith and the beginning of the xxviiith stanza, had Ovid also in his eye, from whom those passages are translated. The lines imitated are

Contremuit, gemitumque dedit decidua quercus;

and afterwards,

Editus et medio sonus est de robore talis.

7.

A peer of France, Astolpho was my name.

Stanza xxxiii. line 1.

Astolpho's transformation into a tree is certainly an improvement of the story of Polydore in Virgil, which is ridiculous, if considered as a natural phenomenon. But magic gets rid of all difficulties. Ariosto is supposed to have selected the myrtle as sacred to Venus, and, therefore, figurative of Astolpho's propensities. If the poet had this in his eye, he seems to have punished Astolpho rather according to the character by which he is distinguished in the Innamorato than that in which he

appears in the Furioso. This, indeed, is not the only case in which Ariosto has forgot the difference of colouring which he had given to his copy of Boiardo's picture. Had Boiardo, for instance, dispatched Astolpho to the moon, in search of his own wits as well as Orlando's, he might have been considered as most appropriately selected for such a mission; but this employment appears rather an undeserved satire upon the sober-minded Astolpho of the Furioso. It is rather a curious circumstance that Boiardo should have chosen an English prince as the most perfect representative of the Gascon; and seems to confirm what I have maintained in my introduction to the Innamorato, respecting Boiardo's having been indebted to previous romances for many of his characters. The individuality, indeed, which distinguishes these would lead us to suppose that these romancers drew from story; and the half-lights which have reached us tend to confirm the supposition. Thus Orlando (as I have said in my notes to the first canto) is to be found in the Latin chronicles of the middle ages, under the names of Rutlandus and Ruitlandus. Renaud de Montauban, or Rinaldo di Mont' Albano, we learn also, from early story, was a border Castellain, and his character tallies with his situation in society.

8.

Ork, physeter, &c.

Stanza xxxvi. line 8.

The ork (orca) as mentioned here and afterwards in canto viii, is some ideal sea-monster. In a future canto an ork (orco) is described as a Cyclops.

I have the authority of Motteux, who, "though his name offends a British ear," is an admirable master of English, for the word physeter.

9.

There we beheld a mighty whale, &c.

Stanza xxxvii. line 1.

Every thing in Ariosto, as before said, is construed into some secret sense. The fishes, described in a preceding stanza, are

all said to denote the different conditions of men who are snared by vice, and the whale is interpreted as a fallacious appearance, which is often mistaken for real happiness.

10.

Born with Morgana.

Stanza xxxviii. line 3.

For an account of this fairy, see the Innamorato, where she plays a very conspicuous part.

11.

Was never yet beheld a stranger band, &c.

Stanza lxi. line 1.

The captain of this strange crew is Indolence, the source of all evils. His various followers, so fantastically and precisely painted, are evidently various vices distinguished by peculiarities which have not been, and perhaps cannot now be, satisfactorily explained. Eriphila, who afterwards appears, is Avarice, who guards the path that leads to pleasure. By the beautiful damsels who employ Rogero to defeat, and not to slay her, and who rescue him from the deformed rabble, against whom he was contending, is signified, we are told, that though a generous disposition will resist foul and undisguised vice, it often yields readily to temptation, which is masqued under fairer appearances.

12.

All are arrayed in green, and garlands wear.

Stanza lxxii. line 5.

Here again colour is significant: green was the symbol of fickleness, as blue was the characteristic of constancy.

Lately was published, by the same author, printed uniform with the present work, price 9s. 6d.

THE INNAMORATO

INTENDED AS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FURIOSO

SOLD BY W. BLACKWOOD EDINBURGH AND

T. CADELL STRAND

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

00043548

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016